Encounter

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Lewis' Africa

D. J. Enright
Come to Sunny S

Alfred Kazin
Alvarez' USA

Arnold Beichman
Lowenthal's Viet Nam

W. G. Runciman
Sociologese

edited by
Stephen Spender & Melvin J Lasky

December 1965

Peter Weiss
Auschwitz

Richard Mayne
Muriel Spark

Colin MacInnes
Michael X

John Bayley
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Arthur Koestler
Scientists

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Encounter

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Peter Weiss

My Place

WHEN I STARTED wondering what human habitation or what landscape would be best suited to be described as my place, many possibilities occurred to me. But, from the place where I was born, which is called Nowawes and which according to the guide-books lies next to Potsdam on the railway line to Berlin, and passing over the cities of Bremen and Berlin where I spent my childhood, to the cities of London, Prague, Zürich, Stockholm, Paris, to which I drifted later, all my stopping places have had something provisional about them, as well as all the shorter stops in between, little places I have not mentioned, Warnsdorf in Bohemia, or Montagnola in the Tessin, or Alingsas in West Sweden.

They were points of transit, they offered impressions whose essence could not be held steady, was always vanishing, and when I inquire what there is about them that can now be stressed and found valuable, to give a firm position in the topography of my life, I keep on coming up against what keeps retreating from me, all these cities become blurs, and only one place, where I spent only one day, remains constant.

The cities in which I lived, in whose houses I stayed, on whose streets I walked, with whose inhabitants I spoke, have no definite contours, they merge into one another, they are parts of a single perpetually changing earthly outside world, have a harbour to show in one place, a park in another, in one a work of art, in one a fair, a room in one, in another a gateway, they are available in the wandering design of my travels, they are reached and left again in a fraction of a second and their qualities have each time to be invented anew.

Only this one place, of which I had known for a long time, but which I saw so much later, is separate and special. It is a place for which I was destined but which I managed to avoid. I have had no experience of this place. I have no relation to it, except that my name was on the lists of the people who were supposed to be sent there for ever. Twenty years later, I saw this place. It is unchangeable. Its buildings cannot be mistaken for buildings anywhere else.

It, too, has a Polish name, like my birthplace which someone showed me once from the window of a moving train. It is located in a region where my father, just before I was born, fought for a fabulous imperial army. The place is dominated by the surviving barracks of this army.

It was given a German name to facilitate the understanding of the people who came to work and live there.

THE GOODS TRAINS are clanking by in Auschwitz railway station. Whistling of locomotives and smoke tumbling. Clashing sounds of buffers. The air full of the vapour of rain, the footpaths softened, the trees leafless and wet. Soot-blackened factories, surrounded by barbed wire and walls. Wooden carts grind past, pulled by thin horses, the peasant who drives them heavily muffled, earth-colour. Old women on the footpaths, wrapped in blankets, carrying bundles. Further off in the fields a few farms, bushes and

PETER WEISS, *author of the much-played "The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade," was born in Germany. He emigrated in 1934 to Sweden, where he still lives. The translation from the German is by Christopher Middleton.*

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poplars. Everything gloomy and worn. Ceaselessly the trains on the embankment slowly rolling back and forth, small wagon windows with gratings. Sidings lead away to the barracks and further still across empty fields to the end of the world.

Outside the hut area, re-occupied since the evacuation and looking as if the war had only just ended, iron railings rise up in front of the building which is now called a museum. Cars and buses stand in the parking lot, a group of schoolchildren is just going through the gate, a troop of soldiers in wine-red caps is returning from a tour of inspection. To the left, a long wooden barrack. A little window for the sale of brochures and postcards. Over-heated attendants' rooms. Immediately behind the barrack, low concrete walls, over them a grassy slope, ascending to the flat roof with the short thick square chimney. My map of the camp told me that I was already standing in front of the crematorium, the small crematorium, the first crematorium, the crematorium with the limited capacity. The barrack straight ahead—that was the barrack of the political section, there the registry was located, in which lists of arrivals and departures were drawn up, that is where the female clerks sat, that is where people wearing the death's-head emblem walked in and out.

I come here of my own free will. I was not unloaded from a train. I was not bludgeoned into this place. I have arrived twenty years too late.

Iron grids around the little windows of the crematorium. To the side, a heavy decayed door, hanging crooked from its hinges, clammy cold inside. Crumbling stone floor. In a room immediately to the right, a large iron furnace. Rails in front of it, on these a metal vehicle shaped like a trough, the length of a human body. Inside the cellar two more furnaces, with the death-trucks on the rails, the furnace doors wide open, grey dust inside, on one of the trucks a bunch of dry flowers.

THOUGHTS, NONE. No impressions, except that I am alone here, that it is cold, that the furnaces are cold, the rigidity and rustiness of the trucks. Moisture drips from the black walls. Over there, an open doorway. It leads to the next room. A long room, I pace it out, twenty paces in length. Five paces wide. The walls whitewashed and peeling. The concrete floor worn, with hollows, many puddles; in the ceiling between the massive beams four square lidded apertures running like shafts through the thick stone casting. Cold. Breath at my mouth. Voices far off outside. Footsteps. I walk slowly through this grave. Feel nothing. See only this floor, these walls. Realise: through the apertures in the ceiling they threw the gritty preparation which in the damp air disseminated its gas. At the end of the room a door with iron fittings and a peephole, beyond it a narrow stairway, which leads into the open air. The open air.

There a gallows stands. A huge box of planks with openings that have collapsed inward, surmounted by the post with its beam protruding at a right angle. A notice says that the camp commandant was hanged here. As he stood on the box, the rope around his neck, he saw beyond the double fence of barbed wire the mainstreet of the camp, with the poplars lining it. I walk up the slope on to the roof of the crematorium. The wooden lids with the tar-board nailed over them can be lifted off the insertion holes. Down below is the dungeon. Medical orderlies with gas-masks opened the green cans, sprinkled the contents down on the faces as they gazed upward, quickly put the lids back on again.

ON. I am still outside the camp, the gallows stands on the foundation walls of the interrogation barrack, in which there was a room containing a wood frame with an iron tube above it. They used to hang from the iron tube and were swung back and forth and were beaten with the horsewhip.

The staff buildings stand close together, the administration, the commandant's building, the guard house. Tall windows overlook the crematorium. Everywhere a view over the flat roof which the medical orderlies climbed on to. Very close, the barrack-windows through which could be heard the beatings and the screams from the swinging-room.

Everything close, tightly packed. Past the double row of concrete pillars which carry the barbed wire. Insulators on the wire; signs with the inscription VORSICHT HOCHSPANNUNG. To the right, sheds and buildings like stables, a few watchtowers; to the left, a booth with a sliding window and a shelf under the roof-overhang, for the stamping of documents, then suddenly a gate with the cast-iron curved strip of lettering in which the middle word MACHT tops the arch. A red and white striped barrier-pole is raised, I enter the square that is called the parent camp, *Stammlager*.

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Have read and heard much about this. About the people who marched to work here in the early mornings, into the gravelpits, to road-construction sites, to the factories of the masters, and returned in the evenings carrying their dead, to the sound of an orchestra playing under the trees there. What does this mean, what do I know of it all? Now I only know how these paths look, lined with poplars, dead straight, with side-paths crossing them at right angles, between them the symmetrical 40-metres long two-storey blocks numbered 1 to 28. A small imprisoned town, with an order imposed by force, completely isolated. Here and there a visitor in the watery mist, looking up distantly at the houses. Far off, at a corner, the children passing by, led by their teacher.

Here are the kitchens on the main square, and in front of them a wooden sentry-box, with a high pointed roof and a weather-vane, with gaily painted stone dovetailing, like a tiny fort from a child's box of building bricks. It is the orderly officer's hut, from which the parades were supervised. I once knew about these parades, about these hours of standing in rain and snow. Now I only know about this deserted loamy square, at the centre of which three posts supporting an iron rail are rammed into the ground. I know also how they stood here under the rail on stools, and how the stools were then knocked away from underneath them, and how the men with the death's-head caps hung on to their legs, to break their necks. Hearing and reading about it, I had seen it in front of me. Now I do not see it any more.

Above all, the impression that everything is smaller than I had imagined. From every point the boundary fence can be seen, the light grey wall of concrete blocks beyond the barbed wire surround. At the outer right-hand corner of blocks 10 and 11, connected by walls, the open wooden door in the centre, leading to the court-yard with the Black Wall.

This Black Wall, at whose edges short bits of planking jut forward to catch the bullets, is now disguised with cork slabs and wreaths. Forty paces from the gate to the wall. Pieces of tiling stamped into the sand floor. Along the damp-proofing of the left-hand building, whose windows are boarded over, runs the gutter where the blood gathered from the heaps of people who had been shot. They came running, naked, turning right at the doorway, down the six steps, two at a time, their arms held by the corporals. And behind the nailed-up windows of the building opposite, lay the women whose wombs were filled with a white cement-like mass. This is where the Block 11 washroom is located. Here the people who had to go to the wall took off their pitiful blue-striped clothes, here in this small dirty room, its lower half daubed with tar, its upper half with whitewash, full of rusty and blackish marks and stains, with a metal washing trough around it, run through with black pipes, crossed with the tubing of a shower, here they stood, with their numbers inked on to their ribs.

This is the washroom, this the stone corridor, divided up by iron gratings, first the block-leader's room, with the desk, camp-bed and cupboards, on the wall the motto Ein Volk Ein Reich Ein Führer, a wire grating over the doorway, like looking into a display cabinet. A panopticon, too, the courtroom opposite, with the long council-table, the minute-books on the grey cloth, for now and then the sentences of death were also pronounced, by men who now live honest lives and enjoy social respect.

Now the stairway leading to the bunkers. They have taken the trouble to touch up the walls with a fringe of glimmering marble. The centre corridor, and to the right and left the side-corridors with the cells, about 3 by 2½ metres, with a bucket in a wooden box and a tiny window. Some, too, without a window, with only an air-hole in a top corner. There were up to forty people in here, they fought for a space by the door, tore off their clothes, collapsed. There were some who were still alive after a week without food. There were some whose thighs bore the marks of teeth, whose fingers were bitten off by the time they were dragged out.

I look into these places, which I myself eluded, stand between the fossil walls, hear no stamping of bootsoles, no shouts of command, no groaning and whimpering.

Here, off this narrow hallway, are the four standing-cells. Over there is the opening by the floor, a half-metre square, iron bars inside it still, they crawled in there and stood four together, in a shaft measuring 90 by 90 centimetres. Above, the air-hole, smaller than the palm of a hand. Stood there for five nights, ten nights, two weeks every night after the heavy toil of the day.

Against the outside wall of the block there are concrete boxes, each with a small perforated metal lid. From here the air passes through the

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long wall-shaft into the cells in which they stood, their backs, knees, pressing on stone. They died standing, had to be scraped out down below when morning came.

I HAVE BEEN walking around in the camp for hours now. I know my way. I have stood in the courtyard by the Black Wall. I have seen the trees behind the wall and have not heard the small-arms shots fired point blank in the back of the head. I have seen the beam from which they were hung by the hands tied behind their backs, only a foot above the floor. I have seen the rooms with the covered windows, in which women had their ovaries burned away by X-rays. I have seen the corridor in which they all stood, tens of thousands, and slowly moved into the doctor's room, and were led, one after another, behind the grey-green curtain, where they were forced on to a stool and had to raise the left arm and take an injection into the heart, and through the window I saw the courtyard outside, where the one hundred and nineteen children from Zamosc waited and went on playing ball until their turn came.

I have seen the drawing of the kitchen-building roof, on which were painted in big letters the words: There is a way to freedom—its milestones are OBEDIENCE, INDUSTRIOUSNESS, CLEANLINESS, HONESTY, SINCERITY, SOBRIETY, and LOVE OF THE FATHERLAND. I have seen the mountain of shorn-off hair in a display cabinet. I have seen the relics of children's clothes, the shoes, the toothbrushes, the dentures. It was all cold and dead.

There is constantly the clanking and rumbling of the goods trains, puffing from the locomotive funnels, the long drawn-out whistlings. Trains move toward Birkenau through the broad flat landscape. Here, where the loamy path ascends to the railway embankment, and crosses it, the masters stood with outstretched hands and pointed to the open fields and decided on the foundation of the place of banishment, which is now subsiding again into the marshy ground.

A single track deviates from the main one. Runs across the grass, is broken here and there, to a faded long building far off, to a barn with a collapsed roof, a crumbling tower, and runs straight through the arched barn door.

Whereas in the other camp everything was narrow and close, here everything is endless expanse, cannot be surveyed.

To the right, as far as the strips of woodland, the countless chimneys of dismantled and burned-out barracks. Only a few rows of these sties for hundreds of thousands are still standing. To the left, in line and vanishing into the haze, the stone buildings for the women prisoners. In the middle, more than a kilometre in length, the ramp. The principle of order and symmetry is detectable even in decay. Beyond the barn door, at the points, the rail divides to right and left, grass is growing between the sleepers, grass is growing from the macadam of the ramp which hardly rises above the level of the rails. It was a considerable way up to the opened doors of the goods trucks. They had to jump one and a half metres down on to the sharp-edged stones, throwing down their luggage, and their dead. To the right went the men who were allowed to live a bit longer, to the left the women who were judged still fit for work, straight ahead for the old and the sick and the children lay the way that led to the two smoking chimneys.

THE SUN, near the horizon, breaks from the clouds and is reflected in the windows of the watch-towers. To right and left at the end of the ramp lie clumps of ruins among trees, the poplars by the fencing behind are motionless, far off in a farmyard some geese are cackling. To the right, that is the little birch forest. I see before me the women and children who are waiting there, a woman carries her baby at her breast, and in the background a group is moving toward the underground chambers. In the gigantic heap of stones, with its bent iron girders and collapsed concrete roof, one can still make out the architecture. Here a narrow staircase leads down into the hallway which is about 40 metres long, where the benches were and numbered hooks in the wall for hanging up shoes and clothes. Here they stood naked, men, women and children, and they were told to remember their numbers, so that they would find their clothes again after the shower.

These long stone trenches, through which millions of people were sluiced into the rooms going off at right angles, with the holed metal columns, and were then brought up to the furnaces, to be scattered across the surrounding landscape as brown sweetish reeking smoke. These stone trenches, to which steps descend, worn smooth by millions of feet, empty now, returning again to sand and earth, lying peacefully under the setting sun.

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THIS IS WHERE they walked, in the slow procession, coming from all parts of Europe, this is the horizon which they still saw, these are the poplars, these the watch-towers, with the sun reflected in the window-panes, this is the door, through which they went into the rooms that were bathed in glaring light, and in which there were no showers, only these squared metal columns, these are the foundation walls between which they died in the sudden darkness, in the gas which streamed out of the holes. And these words, this knowledge, they tell nothing, explain nothing. Only heaps of stone remain, overgrown with grass. Ashes remain in the earth, ashes of those who died for nothing, who were torn from their homes, their shops, their workshops, away from their children, their wives, husbands, lovers, away from all everyday things, and flung into something incomprehensible. Nothing is left but the total meaninglessness of their death.

VOICES. A bus has driven up, and children climb out of it. The class is now inspecting the ruins. For a while the children listen to the teacher, then they clamber around on the stones, some are already jumping down, they laugh and chase one another, a girl is running down a long cutting which passes beside the remnants of rails across a patch of concrete. This was the slide along which the dead bodies slid to the trucks. Looking back as I walk towards the women's camp, I can still see the children among the trees and hear the teacher clapping his hands to assemble them.

Just as the sun is setting, the ground-mists rise and coil around the low barracks. The doors are open. I walk in, somewhere. And now it is like this: here the breathing, the whispering and rustling is still not covered up by the stillness, these bunks, in three layers, along the side-walls and in the middle, not yet quite deserted, here in the straw, in the heavy shadows, the thousands of bodies can still be sensed, far down, at floor-level, on the planks, in the roofing bays, between the brick supporting walls, packed close together, six in each pit, here the outside world has not quite penetrated, here you can still expect some movement inside, the raising of a head, a hand stretching out.

Yet after a while everything is silent and unmoving even here. A living man has come and what happened here hides itself from him. The living man who comes here, from another world, has nothing but his knowledge of figures, written reports, statements by witnesses, it lies heavy upon him, but he can only grasp what he experiences himself. Only when he himself is dragged away from his table and manacled and kicked and beaten does he know what this is. Only when, beside him, they are herding people together and knocking them down, loading them into wagons, does he know how this is.

Now he is only standing in a vanished world. Here there is nothing more for him to do. For a while everything is utterly still.

Then he knows it has not ended yet.

The Niche

The niche narrows
Hones one thin
Until his bones
Disclose him

Samuel Menashe

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Colin MacInnes

Michael & the Cloak of Colour

FOR SOME TIME messages had reached me that Michael wanted to see me, but I hadn't done anything to make contact. Michael, I knew, was Michael de Freitas, otherwise "Michael X," a friend of the late Malcolm and, it was said, organising a similar black nationalist movement over here. I had also heard that Michael, like Malcolm, had a "hustling" background, and had been involved, in the Notting Vale area, with Rachmanism—at first as an opponent, and then a supporter of that enterprising slum landlord: whom one may see, depending on one's point of view and possibly colour, either as an exploiter of the racial situation (since he turfed out whites and let coloureds their rooms at exorbitant rentals), or as a healer of racialism (since at any rate he got the coloureds rooms with no questions asked in an area most whites didn't want to live in anyway).

I did not want to meet Michael because I don't want to have anything to do with Negro politics. Apart from natural sloth and fears, I have three reasons. I believe, and always have, that only Negroes will secure Negro emancipation—and surely events in Africa and America bear this out. I also believe that for whites attuned to Negro aspirations their efforts should be directed to persuading their own people to behave themselves, and not presuming to "help" Spades: since the sickness of the racialist is in far greater need of cure than the sufferings of his victims. I further feel—and here agree entirely with Michael—that Negro organisations are most effective when manned only by Negroes since whites, however well-meaning, always dilute the effort; and what is more, that Negroes —except for the most superficial tactical reasons —don't want whites to join in with them, anyway. And if this exclusiveness be called racialism, I would like to ask why we do not at all object to English Jews most properly and sensibly having their own exclusive organisations without a Gentile in them, and never feel, for this reason, that they are less "English" than we or in any way disloyal.

At last Michael himself called me on the telephone and said he wished to see me. The pretext was that he had been asked to speak at the Cambridge Union (on Viet Nam) and wanted to know the procedure on these occasions. The summons was cordial, if somewhat lordly, it being evident I had to come to him and not he to me. Before introducing him to the reader, here is his brief biography. Born Trinidad thirty-two years ago of a Negro mother and Portuguese Jewish father (that is, like Malcolm, he is partly of white blood). Left school at 12, came to England at 15. To the Notting Vale area in 1957 (the year before the riots)—"the area of misfits," as Michael aptly calls it—and became involved in "business" (a word that, in West Indian parlance, can have many meanings) and the racial struggle. So far as I can judge, by asking other Negroes what they think of Michael, opinions vary between a cynical assurance he is on the make, and an equal certainty that he is, if a rough diamond, a reliable political animal.

Michael is short, stocky, soft-voiced, eloquent, crafty, and seductive; and also, one suspects, capable of violence and duplicity. He is highly intelligent and, when speaking off the record, lucid and sardonic, though he can also relapse into set-piece disquisitions which recall a not very meaningful *Panorama* programme. The strongest impression he made on me in several meetings is that however mixed his motives may be, however ambitious and potentially unscrupulous, he is a creative man of undoubted personality, will, and ultimate seriousness. In his personal relations with whites, incidentally, and whatever his public attitudes may be, he is entirely at ease and affable; and if there are any chips on his shoulder, I failed to see them.

When I decided on this essay, I asked (the

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first time) for a formal interview for which I prepared a number of questions—some of them, I hoped, loaded. I am bound to say that on this more solemn occasion, Michael's "on the record" answers seemed to me much less frank —and much less interesting—than his earlier off the cuff remarks: indeed, to use a delightful Trinidadian term, I had the feeling he was trying to "mamagai" me (that is, delude, give me the soft soap) throughout most of the conversation. I am therefore giving both Michael's formal answers with my own interpretation of them, together with reflections not arising directly from the interview.

WHO ARE *coloured people?*

We are not "coloured," says Michael, we are *black*. By the "black" races he understands not only the Africans, American Negroes, and Caribbeans, but the Latin Americans and Asians also. For centuries, says Michael, we were taught to be ashamed of being black, as much by Christianity as by colonialism. "We were black as sin, while white is as pure as a bridal veil."

What Michael seems to mean by "black" is thus, in effect, "non-white": it is a definition by negation, since I cannot see an Argentinian, or a Thailander, say, exactly seeing himself as "black." What he also surely means by "black" is something like "poor and ex-colonised peoples" for this would cover all his categories except, perhaps, for the Japanese. This definition also excludes the Russians, Poles, and other European Communist countries not only because they are white, but also relatively prosperous. In this respect one sees that the Communist-capitalist alignments are less real to Michael than the rich-poor divisions, and also that he is both pro-Communist (if the Communists are, say, Chinese) and anti-Communist (if they are, say, Russian).

Michael's categories may not seem very realistic if one sees them in terms of race—for a Negro *is*, after all, a Negro and not, for instance, an Indonesian. And incidentally, I do wish Negro propagandists (will you possibly see this, Jimmy Baldwin?) would make up their minds if they are the same as everybody else, or not. On the one hand they insist vehemently that they are, but on the other that nature and experience have given them rare and special qualities. What I expect they mean is that they are equal in the sight of God (or nature, or the tax inspector) but different in their bodies, talents, and mentalities. The blanket claim to be "treated like anyone else" is therefore entirely just so far as political and economic rights go, but meaningless if they really do feel they are "the same as anyone else." For peoples *are* different (in the white world, Greeks, for instance, manifestly aren't Norwegians), and one can surely admire a Negro more than, say, an Indian if one wants to and can give reasons, or *vice versa*.

But in a general way, Michael's classification of "blackness" seems to me valid, though I don't at all agree with it. It corresponds, it is evident, very closely to that of the Chinese (though they call it not "blackness," but "anti-imperialist" or some such term) and it undoubtedly reflects both an economic reality (the poverty of economically backward peoples) and a psychological need, which is to overthrow all traces of present or former alien domination. Of course, it is a temporary alliance—since anyone who believes the Chinese and Negroes have a permanent identity of interests will believe anything; and even the Africans, who are supposed to be naïve politically, do not credit this. But they do—or most of them—see the East as more fruitful allies than the West, and are prepared to play along with this thought however great the risk of being liberated by new conquerors. Nor should any white underestimate the deep wells of venom towards the rich white world that exists—despite an affable exterior—in so many black and yellow hearts. They believe they were kicked in the teeth and robbed for centuries and there is no doubt they want to bring us down and make us suffer.[1] There is no doubt either

[1] I find great difficulty in persuading white friends this is so. Whites—especially Britons—think that once a battle with a people is over, all is forgotten. An Irishman, I remember, once said to me, "You English are very good at forgiving the crimes you have committed on others." But the freed victim has a long, long memory. And as for blacks: not only do they still see their brethren in chains for which they hold us responsible—and for which, so far as South Africa and Rhodesia go, we certainly partly are—but they have long folk memories of a million insults to the flesh and spirit. No coloured man I know, however well and for however long, doesn't come up with this killer rancour sooner or later. The force of the rage, even in a close friend, is unmistakable. Whites who have not been on the receiving end of these diatribes don't understand the depth and extent of the motive force behind them.

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that when Malcolm X called us all "devils" this corresponds to a belief that we, the whites, are a freak people—as indeed, by purely numerical standards, in a global sense we are—and one of prodigious cruelty. Our astonishing positive achievements are quite forgotten: I suppose because to talk of the glories of European culture to a slave means nothing to him.

WHAT ARE *the defects of coloured people?*

I have never succeeded in getting a Negro, even an intellectual, to answer this question (though Indians, even Caribbean Indians, will), and I recall that when I interviewed Julius Nyerere on radio (before he achieved power) he shook his head with a polite smile when I put it to him. Usually the tactic is to embark on a potted history of slavery and colonialism and to explain all Negro defects in terms of the historic distortions to which the Negro people were subjected. All, or almost all, of this is true, however much whites tend to forget it. But it does not answer the question of what Negro defects are *as of now*, nor can one ever learn how long this argument from history will continue to be used, particularly in those parts of the Negro world that have achieved political power and should become free of it some time.[2]

This is not, of course, to deny that Negroes are self-critical in the private sphere—indeed, they are marvellously so. Nor can one ignore public self-criticism among themselves—Drs. Nkrumah and Nyerere, for instance, are constantly castigating the faults of their fellow-countrymen. But in relation to the whites the ranks close and the pre-recorded version is turned on: you wronged us and are sinners, we, the wronged, are blameless and remain so. This attitude accompanies a curious belief that Negroes, to whites, are quite invisible: we see them, yes, but know nothing of them. Of course whites have been, and often still are, guilty of the same stupidity—of presuming, when they live among coloured people, that they are not accurately observed, assessed, and judged. But the convention among blacks that their quirks, as well as their virtues, remain sealed off from us unnoticed, is surely rather silly. For though the interpenetration of the white and coloured worlds in Africa, Europe, and the Americas has been fragmentary and often superficial, a lot of us by now have, by direct and often painful experience, become possessed of many of the clues.

I asked Michael to spare me the habitual seminar on Negro history (while fully admitting he feels this while I only know it) and said to him, come on, is there anything wrong with you—you, just as you are? Or to take an example, why are there hundreds of Indian and Chinese restaurants in London and hardly any opened by West Indian enterprise? Thus pressed, Michael made these somewhat grudging admissions. The first is that coloured men are "too fond of their pricks." By this he is not, I imagine, denying the beauty of Negro sensuality, but suggesting its promptings occupy a disproportionate part in Negro life. Why? Because, he said, in the West Indies the men cannot all get work while the women have to, so that the "saga boys" are left with sex as a principal preoccupation. His next admission was that "our men don't grow up till they're thirty," and I think he's right and that coloured men—West Indians and Americans, if not Africans—do retain boyish habits even longer than Englishmen with their notorious delayed adolescence. As to why—for an adult to be treated like a "boy" for generations may turn him into one, though here we may notice that while "boy" used by a white to a Negro adult is now (properly) deemed an insult, Trinidadians do call themselves "boy" one to the other (as well as "man"), suggesting that they unconsciously accept the definition. To the question about why there was no enterprise to open Caribbean restaurants, he said it was "not in the nature of the non-Asian to create." Here I think he must, once again, have had the West Indies (and British Guiana) particularly in mind, where the Asian populations have shown an energy disproportionate to their numbers: for to believe that the Africans, for instance, are "uncreative" is to know nothing about them whatsoever.

Throwing the switch, at this point I asked Michael,

Can you say anything to the credit of the English?

Michael, after platitudes about "good in both camps," said basically *no*; and went on to make his most revealing remark of the session, which

[2] The Thailand delegate to a recent international conference in Rome said, "Being the only Asian nation which was never colonised, we are in the unfortunate position of having to blame all our troubles on ourselves."

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is that the English are "so incredibly stupid as to make it possible for us to be here at all." How this would warm the cold heart of Colin Jordan and whoever that M.P. is who is always thundering against the unwelcome presence of the Negroes! And one can understand how the Black Muslims in the U.S. feel closer to the local fascists (and admit them to their meetings) than to any other whites since fascists, too, are rigid segregationalists. Indeed, in one sense at any rate, we Britons certainly *were* stupid. For until quite recently, there was no "plan" whatever for immigration—I mean not only none to halt it, as at present, but worse, not even one to welcome it and make it function as harmoniously as could be. Think of the pains the Germans, say, or Dutch, have taken to absorb alien populations! Think even of the lackadaisical Australians when they made ready to absorb 1½ millions of foreigners in fifteen years! But here, it all just happened. It really is unbelievable that after nearly twenty years of massive immigration, with round about a million (with their English-born children) of these coloured, we have no Minister of Immigration, no department, only hole-in-the-corner offices and committees without powers or money.

In general, Michael saw no great virtues in us even in what he calls, condescendingly, white "sympathisers"—whom his tactic is, I think, to neutralise rather than to enlist. His contempt for "white liberals" equals that of American Negro militants, and at this point I asked him the same question I put to James Baldwin (see the triologue published in the July ENCOUNTER), namely, if you dislike racialists, and despise liberals, and aren't a Muslim who deems all whites devils, which the hell whites do you like —if any? Baldwin, as will be recalled, said "only mavericks," which is fair enough, but there are precious few of these, and the logic of a black racialist attitude does indeed seem to me to conduct you to Elijah Muhammed's posture, which is that of a total rejection of all whites. (Elijah, too, is partly white: how often does the man of two races, or even an alien one, lead a national movement! Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, De Valera, Churchill, and so many Latin American leaders, for example.)

At this point Michael and I became rather heated (his eyes flashed and he raised his arm in a not-so-mock gesture, while I gathered my prim defensive skirts around me), for he was now calling me a "liberal" and I was calling him a "racialist." I don't think Michael is in any personal sense, but I can't see how his policy (see below) can lead him to other than a racialist position. As to my being a "white liberal," or "paternalist" (another favourite term among coloured militants for any white who likes them), if this means a person who condescends to Negroes, wants them to be "like him," but basically wishes to keep them in their places, then I can't quite see myself as one. To the trick question about someone marrying my daughter I can't answer since I haven't got one, but as a soldier I would certainly follow a Negro in battle if I thought him the better man —as, remembering my military career, he could hardly avoid being. I want absolute equality even—this is really the rub—as regards opportunities for making and keeping money. A "liberal" does not: he wants politeness on the cheap, without pain, without loss, without fundamental readjustment. All I'd like to do is fight it out, or make friends, with Negroes without anyone (not me either) having their hands tied behind their backs by political or economic facts, or lazy labels.[3] And my real interest is much more my own people, and hoping *they* will be wonderful, and knowing they never will until they're purged of the racialist virus.

Most Negroes, I think, want much the same sort of equality, but many undoubtedly hope for something more. Absurd as it may seem to speak of this at a moment when the U.S. South

[3] When *City of Spades* appeared in 1956, I was denounced both by "white liberals" and Negro intellectuals. The liberals thought I'd been "unfair" to coloureds since I'd presented some of them in an unfavourable (and entirely characteristic) light. The Negroes thought it was no business of mine to write about them anyway (that is their privilege, though they, of course, may write to their heart's content about us) and that by showing my hero—an African—as fallible, I was having a go at the coloured races. My modest aim, in fact, was to show the white-coloured world *as it operates* in London (placing it in a "hustler" setting because only there *does* it operate) and, subsidiarily, to issue a mild warning to my fellow-countrymen. And if anyone doesn't see that Johnny Fortune, the failed hero, *is* a hero, then—forgive the comparison—Othello is not a hero either. The convention in books, plays, films and on T.V. that Spades always must be noble is, if one pauses a second to think of it, untruthful, patronising and, fundamentally, anti-coloured: a stereotype in reverse, no longer Uncle Tom but Nephew Galahad.

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is still, despite ant-like progress, the fine old South it always was, South Africa a madhouse, and social and economic discrimination against coloured men exist in our own country, I believe many Negroes dream of victory and revenge. Well, if they do, I'm going to fall out of love with them—not that they'll care a damn about that—and oppose them too. For the fact is that a sadistic or masochistic attitude to Negroes are both comfortable (though intellectually and humanly despicable), whereas to acknowledge their rights, and pay for them, and to maintain your own, and stick up for them, requires a painful daily effort of adjustment.

WHAT—*if any—degree of assimilation do you want?*

The Maori slogan in relation to the New Zealand whites is "integration without assimilation": that is, an attitude comparable to that of orthodox English Jews who want complete equality of rights with other citizens and yet to preserve their own ethnic identity. Michael says he wants "assimilation at all levels"—but perhaps here there was a confusion of words, since I don't imagine he wishes the Negro minority to be absorbed into the English mass. (Imagine a decorous Anglo-Negro suburb in fifty years time, "assimilated" to the flaccid English pattern!)

I here raised the point of how many West Indians, especially, will ever return to their Caribbean Isles? Africans, as we know, being firmly based at home, are mostly birds of passage, while many Asians, too, want to make their pile and take it back to India or Pakistan; but my belief is that few West Indians will ever see their former homes again. Marriage, children in local schools, mortgages, jobs—everything will hold them here, I think, the more so as even increased prosperity on the Islands is failing to match the bursting increase in population. According to Michael, "more than half" believe they will one day return, and there is no doubt most of our compatriots fervently hope they will. In reality, said Michael, only some 20% will ever go back—largely due to the coming "great depression" here which Michael, not without relish, prophesies. My own guess is that, "depression" or not, no more than some 5% will see the Isles again.[4]

And what about the children of immigrants, whether entirely "black" or of mixed parents? Won't they, born and reared in England, and taught at English schools, become increasingly alienated from their parents (as second-generation American immigrants are) and in fact feel themselves to be English? No, according to Michael. They are in the "unfortunate position" of believing themselves part of the community, then finding they cannot make it in the white world, so that soon they will feel themselves more than ever black: though Michael did admit that the native-born find their immigrant mothers' social customs "old-fashioned"—as indeed they are. I think he is wrong about this, but as children of the post-war immigration are not yet adults, only time will show.[5]

I NEXT asked Michael

Do you see any points, at present, in which genuine integration has occurred?

He at first answered no, but when I pressed him, admitted that in the "hustling" (semi-criminal) and show-biz worlds it has taken place, but that this was about all. Students, workers, professional people—no: there was no real meeting of the white and coloured spirits.

Incidentally, although we did not discuss this, I myself believe that of the three main points of social friction between the races—sex, jobs, and housing—the first, though traditionally thought to be the most pernicious, is the least. This is because, left to themselves, Negroes mostly marry Negresses, and if they go with white

[4] Unless, of course, massive coloured immigration into the U.S. or Latin America were permitted. In such an event, West Indians would mostly flee our shores like homing swallows.

[5] I must say I think we in Britain have a special obligation to West Indians. Our passage through Africa and Asia was essentially transitory—that is, the countries we colonised in these areas existed long before we came, and their basic social customs survived intact despite our passing presence in them. But the West Indians were brought there by us—either as slaves or, in the case of Asians, as indentured labourers. We took away their laws and languages and imposed ours on them. Our association has lasted for hundreds of years, we extracted immense wealth from the Islands, and have taken their help for granted in a dozen wars. In a real sense the West Indies, unlike any other former colony, are our own creation. West Indians may not like this idea, and no one could deny them a highly individual personality, nor their absolute right now to work out a destiny different from our own. But our debt remains, and when they ask us partly to discharge it by taking some of their people here, we should accept the obligation.

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girls these are very committed ladies who hardly move in the white sexual world at all. The in-pouring of coloured women in recent years also means that the footloose Negro male is becoming rarer, and though some Negroes seek white sex for "kicks," or revenge, or by genuine inclination, this seems to me an inflated fringe "problem," for wages and houses are what really count.

We now came to the question of what Michael hopes to do, and I asked him

What are your proposed fields of action and organisation?

An active intervention in Trade Union affairs especially in industries of coloured concentration. Election of coloured shop stewards. Persuading all coloured people to get on the electoral register and vote on a coloured or sponsored ticket. Foundation of "cultural centres" not just for playing calypsos, but teaching *karate*. Protection of coloured defendants in courts from prejudiced police and magistrates by panels of coloured (including, of course, Indian) and sympathetic white lawyers.

Karate, I said. What about violence? Here Michael blew his top. English people, he told me, are always preaching against violence but when—as in 1958—it was used against coloured men, they do absolutely nothing whatever to prevent it. It is "disastrous," says Michael, "that a man cannot walk down the street without fear because of the colour of his skin." So violence henceforward will be met with violence, he says.

In the first place, how much violence is there here by whites against blacks? Ask almost any white, and almost any black, and you will get contradictory answers. The white thinks if this ever happened (as in 1958), it doesn't any more. The blacks say attacks still constantly occur. I think there are three things to say here. First, I would trust a black opinion on this rather than a white—for however observant you are, you can't *know* the situation unless you are black, and so can test white reactions daily. (Only a fortnight before writing this I saw some dozen whites outside a pub in London W.11 setting about two Spades pushed up against a car). The next is that there's a lot of violence around anyway these days, and not only blacks are victims of it. The third is that West Indians in particular (and Jamaicans even more in particular) are themselves a violent people, easily roused and given to using knives. So I think if the Negroes have a case here, as they have, it is far from a complete one.

But what will be the effect on the white majority of increased retaliation by blacks to any white aggression? Won't it be to stir up anti-coloured feeling and encourage racialist groups? Well—of course it will: but Michael thinks the risk worth taking. White publicists, it seems to me, when they warn Negroes against "taking the law into their own hands" always forget, first, that the law protects whites much more effectively than it does coloureds (both at the police and court levels, as anyone with experience of both well knows), and also that if a man is constantly subjected to assault without possibility of legal or personal retribution, his dignity will demand that he returns individual blow for blow. I am sorry to say this (being non-violent because neither tough nor brave—not, alas, because of principle), but many human creatures, in the world as it is and particularly in urban jungles, only behave themselves if they know for sure that any physical liberty will be met with a sharp bang on the snout. At any rate, Michael thinks Negroes have more to gain than lose by refusing any more to turn the other cheek. Considering how small the Negro minority is he may be wrong, but on the other hand it is very concentrated in relatively few urban areas, and no doubt it will soon be as dodgy for a white to wander into Paddington as it is into Bedford-Stuyvesant, N.Y.C.

I was not inquisitive about Michael's actual organisation, because I'm not interested in secrets that don't concern me, but I gather that R.A.A.S. has extensive cells in all areas of coloured (including Asian) population, especially in industrial districts. R.A.A.S. by the way, stands for Racial Adjustment Action Society, but these words (like Ian Fleming's SPECTRE) were probably chosen for their initials which collectively form an extremely rude West Indian word. Funds, Michael says, are extremely low, and one can believe this, since all political parties—even the Republican party of the U.S.—are always hard up, and there are few coloured tycoons in England. In general, I would say from what Michael volunteered and what other coloured men have told me, this is a serious militant organisation broadly based, and if Michael does indeed succeed in uniting citizens of the fissiparous West Indian islands, let alone Negroes with Asians (who usually tend to despise each other), this will be a considerable feat.

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HOW IMPORTANT *is Islam to the movement?*

According to Michael, genuinely so, chiefly because Islam is a non-racialist religion. However, he insists that R.A.A.S. is not a "Black Muslim" organisation like that of Elijah Muhammed, but more akin to the black nationalist movement that Malcolm X founded before his death. Though Michael talked solemnly about Islam, I somehow just can't see West Indians learning Arabic, studying the Koran, and going without liquor—though here one should remember that the long-established Ras Tafari movement of Jamaica is somewhat similar (Indian hemp, however, replacing spirits), also that many of the potential Asian members are Muslims, often, already.

As for Malcolm X himself, how far has his example influenced Michael and the movement? "A wonderful, beautiful man," said Michael gravely. "A dignified human being. Malcolm was a cast-off of society, so he took himself *out* of society, surmounted the educational and race barriers (*i.e.*, educated himself and refused to accept second-class status) so as to restore dignity to the black man." Although Malcolm was considered a freak or a menace by most whites (certainly by most Britons) it is striking to notice how anyone who knew him always speaks of him in rapt and affectionate terms. Clearly, he is already a legendary Negro martyr killed, as most great martyrs are (Jesus, Joan, Gandhi, and so on) by his own people.

Do you envisage alliances with any of the conventional parties, including the Communist?

No, according to Michael. Although here one cannot but note that, even if this is so, his line is, for the present anyway, parallel to that of Peking, the more so as, in so far as I could grasp his economic ideas, they are anti-capitalist.

At its simplest, then, one could say, if taking an optimistic view, that what Michael aims at is to persuade "the black man to do things for himself" and to restore to him a dignity that 400 years of the white experience have deprived him of. "If the barriers between black and white can be approached humanely," Michael said, with rather surprising humanity, "then there is no problem." As regards England, though it is his field of operation, he is extremely sceptical and says, "England does not belong to the modern world, and what I would like to do for the English is to integrate them into 20th century society." Well, considering our general decrepitude, he's certainly got a point there.

Taking the gloomy view, Michael's efforts could have the result of enhancing racialism on both sides, although he maintains this hardly needs enhancing anyway. I dare say he underestimates the fund of cruelty and resentment that exists potentially in the apparently docile, "neutral" majority of English people—whose present feeling towards Negroes is simply to wish they were not there (except when coloured nurses save their lives in hospital), but who could be whipped up into the kind of hatred that once bedevilled Anglo-Irish relations. For the celebrated English tolerance is usually only indifference, and when they are shaken out of this by fright or pain, the English can show their fangs.

I THINK his movement is an entirely predictable local manifestation of a world-wide movement, in the racial sector, that has been coming to the boil for some time.[6] In Africa, America and the West Indies, and indeed everywhere among "non-white" peoples, there has been a nationalist-racialist upsurge of growing momentum. What disconcerts and amazes whites (who haven't thought very much about it) is that this movement, once off the ground, is insatiable in its demands, and won't settle for anything less than absolutes: that is, at least total economic, political, and social equality, at most, a nonwhite imperialism in reverse. The second can of course be denied, and should be, but as to the first, it is hopeless to imagine that the passing of a Civil Rights bill in the U.S., or the independence of parts, but not all,

[6] Before bidding farewell to Michael, I append some cynical reflections on the position of the coloured intellectual in English society. Although most of them castigate us, they do in fact occupy a highly privileged position: for they know the liberal establishment will support them (with their press, telly programmes, theatres, and prize awards) and that conservatives are too uninterested to harm them. What is more, despite most of their productions having Negro settings, hardly a Negro reads or goes to see them, so that they're in fact addressing themselves to whites. Thus Negro intellectual nationalism, in this country, has always seemed to me to be militancy in a vacuum, in which they conduct a strident battle against an invisible foe swathed in wet cotton wool. By contrast, what is special about Michael is both that he is addressing his own people directly, and that he is physically entering zones of maximum danger to himself.

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of Africa, or the local appointment of one coloured magistrate (and no coppers) in the entire country, will satisfy Negro demands. And as far as England is concerned, it is no good saying (even if this is correct) that we, as few nations have, accepted a massive coloured immigration without, at any rate, impossible frictions, if the immigrants themselves discover that we operate a grey, occult colour bar in jobs, housing, and places of public concourse.

In the end, I believe that economic factors are the most important—for example, no African is going to believe we oppose *apartheid* or white Rhodesian supremacy, because of our vast investments there. And no local Negro is going to think we are not racialists when we make it clear that the best jobs go to the English, even before coloured men of equal talent, and that the Negroes are destined to take that place at the bottom of the ladder which was once occupied by the Irish. Of course, economic prosperity is no guarantee, in itself, that racial nationalism will be avoided: for in Japan, the only modernised Afro-Asian country, there is every sign of a heightened nationalism, and we may remember that in 1914, Germany was, potentially if not actually, the richest nation of the Continent. All one can say is that without economic equality, racialism on both sides, despite all well-intentioned persons, will be bound to flourish.

The subsidiary cure lies in the loss of racial feeling—and it is sad to admit that Europeans, especially Britons and their descendants overseas, are more afflicted by this than the coloured races they despise. The sickness seems to me practically incurable, at any rate to anyone over 25 who's got it: no argument, no reason, has the least effect whatever; and if you feel that way, you doubtless will do even if Negroes were saints, and rich, or even if in the position to offer you the keys of heaven. This is a disaster, since to anyone with eyes in their heads, the Negro people are clearly on the verge of astonishing achievements, bursting again out of centuries of silence.

The only consolation is to reflect that, in a curious way, as racialism gets worse everywhere (even the Afro-Asian-Latin Americans who denounce it becoming infected with it) one also senses it is cracking: the world is getting too small, too integrated, too vulnerable, too *bored* with the whole damn silly subject for it to mean much a century from now. And we may look forward to the day when Michael's grandson, sewing the cloak together again because the beggar no longer needs it, will be organising men to some good purpose without remembering his grand-dad's dated obsession as to whether they were black, or the lost white folly that made them conscious of it.

Lepidoptera

The butterflies are leaving.
Brown and drab, they have it—
Industrial melanism.
The beauties are rare,
Delicately sipping
You sometimes see
A Pot-Bellied Purple
With a primping White Lady
In flower-banked
Expense account restaurants.

The nettles are tidied away,
Disturbing the life cycle.
It's goodbye to the Red Director,
The Diamond Duchess
And *Meretrix superpicta*.

Gavin Ewart

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Aelred Graham

The Pathos of Vatican II

Some Comments on "Catholic Disarray"

As THE SECOND Vatican Council approaches its conclusion the Roman Catholic Church is in considerable disarray. When Pope John XXIII decided to open the ecclesiastical windows he had no notion that he might be letting in a minor hurricane. Comments on the ensuing turmoil have been many and various. But few have come from the relatively well-informed insider, one who in this case would repudiate, no doubt vainly, any such label as liberal or conservative, progressive or reactionary. The claim of a believing Catholic to be entirely objective on this topic may raise a smile. At least he can make the attempt to be clear-headed and honest. It is with pretensions no greater than these that the following remarks are offered.

Of some relevance today is a question raised by a writer in the *Hibbert Journal* more than fourteen years ago.

> ...the Roman Church, *tam antiqua et tam nova*, haunted by many recurring conflicts and crises, skilled in statesmanship, enriched by an unfathomable memory, is a vigilant Mother-Confessor and a wise Director of Souls. A candid Protestant or an honest humanist will find himself at last asking—what, in a world rocking in helpless indecision and revealing ominous cracks of threatened collapse, will become of our Christian heritage and traditional culture should that Church compromise its sense of divine commission, or if, bribed or tortured by lust of power, it should tremble to impose its own discipline, lose its nerve and snap under breaking strain?[1]

That this stage has been reached, desirable as it might appear to some, seems unlikely. It is the inevitability of what has happened at the Vatican assembly which presents, as I see it, an aspect of pathos. The Council had to be; Pope John's instinct was sound in convening it; and yet, from the nature of the case, it could do so little for a world that is in need of so much. There has been no lack of good will. Over two thousand dedicated religious leaders, each with official responsibilities on his own account, gathered together to try to reach a collective mind on how to bring the Church into closer touch with contemporary man. Their achievements, whatever they may be, will be duly lauded in official Catholic circles; but there are few signs that the Vatican Council is to terminate in unqualified satisfaction.

Nevertheless, the lesson of it all could be highly salutary. What is being illustrated are the limitations as well as the effectiveness of institutional religion. If hopes are being disappointed, that is because there were few grounds for them in the first place. Thanks in part to the warm-hearted enthusiasm and glowing rhetoric of Pope John, in part to the unprecedented attention focused on the Council by the world's communications media, expectations were raised to a level for which there was no external warranty. What was in essence a professional discussion

[1] J. M. Lloyd Thomas, *Hibbert Journal* (April 1951).

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among Church administrators has been transformed, in the popular mind, into an occasion for spiritual rebirth and enlightenment. But spiritual rebirth and enlightenment, such is the unvarying record, are not achieved at ecumenical councils; they occur in solitude, or by contact with individuals who have themselves been spiritually reborn and enlightened.

WHEN OPENING the Council Pope John laid down as its chief objective, "that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine shall be maintained and taught in a more effective form." There was nothing in the least rhetorical about this statement, and its force should be appreciated if the Council is not to be misunderstood. For in fairness Vatican II must be judged, not by how it has responded to the wishful thinking of this or that interested party, but by how it has answered its own requirement. Even by this standard any notable success seems problematical. Pope John attracted world attention in exhibiting the fatherly aspect of his office; less conspicuous, though none the less present, was the jurisdictional primacy claimed by the Roman pontiff. Pope Paul is clearly striving to keep both these functions in balance.

The limits imposed on the Vatican assembly by its pastoral and administrative objectives are, I believe, the key to our understanding of it. A sprinkling of laymen may be present, but they have been carefully chosen by the clergy and thus scarcely modify the Council's exclusively clerical character. Bishops deal mainly with the clergy, and for all their good intentions, have little direct contact with the laity. Who but the clergy, or ecclesiastically-minded laymen, could conceivably be interested in a topic that is apparently of absorbing concern to the Council participants—the "collegiality" of bishops? The note of sacerdotal professionalism is nowhere more evident than in the recent liturgical reforms and the imposition of a vernacular liturgy. Whatever their intrinsic merits (and they are many), these enforced changes in the worshipping habits of the faithful have divided Catholic opinion to a degree that was probably not foreseen by those responsible.

IT would be a mistake, however, to underestimate the value of the work actually accomplished by the Council. Legislation is being passed which, in an authoritarian structure such as the Roman Church, could have telling effect. To have written into the record a plea for Catholic ecumenism, an insistence on religious liberty and the paramount rights of the individual conscience, a perhaps too hesitant repudiation of anti-Semitism, an awareness of the need to balance population increase with responsible parenthood—all these are no mere exercise in finding a formula. Being only verbal statements, they cannot change men's hearts; but they provide norms to which appeal can be made and, in the long run, may modify conduct for the better.

Pope Pius XII drew a clear distinction between what he called the Church's "juridical structure" and the *spirit* which gives it life. Over the latter, needless to say, the Council fathers claim no control; their province is strictly juridical. Ever since the Papacy inherited many of the administrative functions of the declining Roman Empire, jurisprudence has played a large part in the Church's affairs. This is deplorable in certain respects, but once Christianity opted to be a religion of the multitude, rather than an *élite*, such an outcome was inevitable. Law and order had to be established, the minimum as well as the maximum in fidelity to the Gospel laid down. Hence the rise to prominence of the administrative bureaucracy known as the Roman Curia, which has been an object of wholehearted abuse since the early Middle Ages.

To regard the Curia, even the department of the Holy Office, simply as an instrument of espionage and repression is to be much less than just. Rome's chief concern is with what is taught to the faithful as a whole. Individual theologians can certainly think, nearly always say, and provided they are not usurping the functions of bishops, most often write what they please, without fear of interference from the Curia. (Happily, after the Council, they are likely to be freer than ever in these respects.) But built into the Catholic structure, as it currently exists, is a supervision of the Church's universal proclamation. "The members of the Curia perform a task, usually efficiently, for which they are irreplaceable," writes Yves Congar, himself no particular friend of the Curia. "The idea, canvassed by several eminent members of the Council, of setting up a sort of permanent synod, or prolonging the existence of the central commission, making it a tribunal with judicial powers, thus reducing the Curia to an executive or administrative role, appears

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to me, in the form in which it is enunciated, quite illusory. Who would do the work?"[2]

Vatican II's chief element of pathos, I believe, lies in the fact that it verifies once more Harnack's verdict, that "since the sixteenth century the Roman Church has been preoccupied with questions of *cultus*." To reform the liturgy, to transpose ancient scriptures into a modern idiom, supposing it had been well done, contributes little to updating the Church. Apart from a select few, modern man has little interest in liturgy. Substantial numbers of Catholic youth will tell you that they couldn't care less in what language church services are conducted. The Mass, which means everything to bishops and priests, is often little more than a tedious ceremonial to the laity. What concerns them is the "ultimate reality" we call God (assuming that He exists!) and the way to live sanely, if possible decently, and most of all, successfully. And yet how could the Council have acted otherwise? What more natural than that bishops should seek to highlight that to which they have dedicated their lives?

But if the official Council has acted according to form and provided no surprises, the same cannot be said of the attendant theologians. Both they and the bishops have, of course, been subject to the kind of pressure exercised by tendentious press-reporting. Writers like Xavier Rynne and contributors to *The Commonweal* are open to the charge of playing heroes and villains with the news: the heroes being the so-called "progressive" bishops and theologians, the villains being the "reactionaries"—including, to leave no prejudice unvoiced, Pope Paul himself; though here account must be taken of the all but total incapacity of the American layman to discuss religion in any but political terms. Alluding to the paradox of Catholic loyalty to the Church, combined with a rooted antipathy towards Catholicism's basic philosophy, Santayana observed some forty years ago, that the American atmosphere "seems to neutralise every intellectual element, however tough and alien it may be, and fuse it in the native good will, complacency, thoughtlessness, and optimism."

Turning to the theologians, I can find little to relieve the general sense of irrelevancy. Some future Church historian may well record that in the nineteen-sixties Catholic theology reached its nadir. Learning, always necessary, and enthusiasm, which has its place, are no substitute for genuine insight. In the course of his enquiries our historian will, one hopes, investigate the incidence of literary log-rolling in theological circles. (Parenthetically, since this is an age of reform, could not the Roman Curia, in the interests of objective truth, to say nothing of common decency, kindly issue an edict restraining members of religious orders from publicly promoting one another's doctrinal wares?!) With unconscious irony Robert Kaiser, Rome correspondent for *Time* magazine, places a finger on the source of the trouble: the most technically proficient theologians have the same mental preoccupations as the bishops.

> The entire weight of all the Catholic scholarship that had been in motion since the end of World War II seemed concentrated in Rome in the persons of theologians like Karl Rahner, Joseph Ratzinger, Yves Congar, M. D. Chenu, Henri de Lubac, Edward Schillebeeckx, Hans Küng. All of them were theologians on the march, men well equipped with ideas that dovetailed neatly into the needs of pastors around the world.[3]

Alas, they dovetail all too neatly into the clerical needs of the moment! Let the fullest tribute be paid to the prodigious industry, earnestness and occasional flashes of insight of Karl Rahner, to Congar's brilliantly sustained ecclesiological labours, to the patristic learning of de Lubac, to the refreshing courage, honesty and even originality of Küng, the fact remains that these men, with the possible exception of Congar, are not in any basic sense formative or critical thinkers. Their underlying assumptions are too many and debatable, their premises insufficiently examined, for them to deserve mention in the same breath with an Aquinas, or for that matter, with a Newman. They can elucidate, develop, and restate Church doctrine, for which they are, however learned and subtle the technique, apologists; but their inclination is not to discuss, without reference to authority, the ultimate human problems. Progressive and *avant-garde* as they may appear, when compared to the standard theological manuals, their type of theologising has been well enough described

[2] It should be noted that the "synod" of bishops recently instituted by Paul VI, to meet only when summoned by the Pope, leaves the Curia structurally intact.

[3] Robert Kaiser, *Inside the Council* (1963, London: Burns & Oates; New York: The Macmillan Co.).

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as "a debate between a closed circle of mandarins within the agreed terms of their system."

A SIGNIFICANT INDICATION of the rootlessness of contemporary Catholic thinking is the attention now being paid to the work of an egregious visionary, Teilhard de Chardin. Religiously devout, he was nevertheless more interested in palaeontology than in the study of Christian origins. Though his orthodoxy has been questioned (needlessly, it seems to me), he appears to have emerged posthumously as the author of a unique brand of theological science-fiction, which many people find exciting and even satisfying. For my part, having tried conscientiously to make sense of *Le Milieu Divin* and *Le Phénomène Humain*, I am left wondering whether Professor P. B. Medawar does not have a point after all:

> The greater part of it is nonsense, tricked out by a variety of tedious metaphysical conceits, in the tradition of *Naturphilosophie*, a philosophical indoor pastime of German origin—tipsy euphoric prose-poetry which is one of the more tiresome manifestations of the French spirit.
>
> (*Mind*, January 1961)

Poor Teilhard, with his ceaseless peregrinations "in conformity with the universal law of centro-complexity," was theologically on his own. He had little influence on Catholicism's so-called "new theology," which is already beginning to look decidedly old. The sources for this are, I believe, easily discernible. First, there is the *"cogito"* of Descartes, which lies behind all specifically *modern* thinking. Descartes may not himself have been an idealist but Hegel, developing the Teutonic variant of the Cartesian tradition, was understandably quite sure that the philosophy of idealism was founded by Descartes. Hegel, as we know, linked idealism with history, and so prepared the way for the replacement of Aristotle's "static" logic by a dynamic, sociological type of dialectic which allowed, in its broad sweep, for a consideration of the Christian Church untroubled by any too close inspection of the evidence.

THE "NEW" THEOLOGY'S second source is Biblical scholarship: a study of the Old and New Testaments, not as a quarry for proof-texts of doctrinal positions, but considered so far as possible as objective history. Here the Roman Church's debt to Protestant scholars is immense and nowadays usually acknowledged. The gains, in terms of a more accurate understanding of the way Christianity began, have been incalculable; but the questions of how far the Founder of the Christian religion can be regarded simply as an historical figure, and what becomes of the supra-temporal dimension which (in common with all the higher religions) Catholicism claims, remain open.

Finally, the writings of all the theologians mentioned earlier reflect the influence of Continental existentialism. Being faithful Catholics, they have a keen sense of Church tradition and their writings are interspersed with quotations from St. Thomas Aquinas; but the intellectual climate is that of the post-war German universities rather than the medieval schools. This is particularly the case with Karl Rahner, who studied for some time under Martin Heidegger. "Healthily stirred up by the problems raised by philosophers from Kant to Heidegger, Rahner can give us a truly new interpretation of Christion theology," writes Jakob Laubach. "Rahner, more than most theologians, is keenly aware of his responsibility towards the spirit of our age."

All this is admirable in its way; but Rahner's often turgid lucubrations reek of the oil:

> Since we cannot here offer a phenomenology and metaphysics of the emotional and volitive side of man, those most general concepts with which scholastic anthropology describes human conation must be presupposed. . . .

The movement of thought, here as with the "new" theologians generally, is from ideas to things and not from things to ideas. "Don't think, but look!" was Wittgenstein's repeated advice to his students. It should be taken to heart by all expositors of religion. As applied to Christianity in particular, no amount of laborious excogitation can answer the basic question: What is the evidence? And what is its value?

BEFORE MODERN theologians can establish a claim to be intellectually "with it" they must, I believe, answer the challenge provided by the philosophers of linguistic analysis. Existentialists notoriously tend to dismiss as trivial or superfluous the question, what do you mean? It does not seem to me that theologians can absolve themselves so easily from the duty of using language significantly, that is to say, with accuracy and precision, and not merely emotively, as clouded by metaphors and figures

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of speech. Judged by this test, what is to be said of the opening sentences of Hans Küng's recent book *Structures of the Church* (dedicated, incidentally, to Karl Rahner)—within its limits a much to be commended study?

> For ecclesiology an ecumenical council is like a prism. Filtered through a triangular glass prism, white, visible-invisible sunlight discloses its rich, multi-coloured spectrum, its inner nature and mode of being. In an ecumenical council, the pure, visible-invisible Church reveals the image of her mysterious, manifold nature to the eye of the believer. As though projected against a screen, the tension-charged structures and the dynamic components of the Church become optically perceptible, presenting themselves with particular clarity for theological analysis.

Roman Catholic theologians, I venture to conclude, have nowhere to go but up. Several members of the Anglican Communion are doing the thing much better, in that they show themselves in closer touch with contemporary realities. Thus, in our present context, Bishop Stephen Neill, in his valuable *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861–1961*, makes an apposite comment on a theologian's utilisation of Heidegger's philosophy.

> This is a familiar procedure. The theologian takes that form of philosophy which is dominant in his day and reinterprets the Christian faith in the terms and categories of that philosophy.... The danger, of course, in all such adaptations is that they make theology living and relevant for a time, but when the philosophical climate changes, the theology which was attached to an outworn philosophy simply disappears.

Even more to the point are Bishop John A. T. Robinson's now world-famous *Honest to God* and its, in many ways more attractive, sequel *The New Reformation?* (in which an appendix, as valuable as it is engaging, by the Bishop's wife, is alone worth the book's price). As is now well known, Dr. Robinson is persuaded of the validity of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's concept of a "religionless Christianity," and he asks, stimulatingly enough: "Can a truly contemporary person *not* be an atheist?" Here it should be stated that I find the Bishop's own so-called "atheism" indistinguishable from the devout agnosticism of St. Thomas Aquinas, where he states (in his *De Veritate*) that, "What God actually is always remains hidden from us; and this is the highest knowledge we can have of God in this life, that we know Him to be above every thought we are able to think of Him."

With the Bishop's analysis of today's religious situation I can see no need to quarrel. It is where he indicates a solution, tentatively enough and as one who is himself searching after truth, that I find him hard to follow. It seems that he may have been misled by a combination of factors, which could include his own institutional commitment, a tendency to generalise from the saintly Bonhoeffer's personal experience, and the influence of the Christo-centric medieval piety that reached a culminating point in Luther—which also largely pervades the current devotional life of the Roman Catholic Church. For Dr. Robinson, the demon of practical Godlessness cannot be exorcised by any direct insistence on theism, only by a personal encounter with Christ, as represented by one's "gracious neighbour."

In individual cases this may prove to be the way of it; but erected into a principle, it does not appear to have any sound rational or historical foundation. The witness of the Fourth Gospel, "You believe in God, believe also in me," indicates the true order of priorities. Jesus' preaching had many difficulties to contend with, but atheism in any intelligible sense was not one of them. He came to reveal a God in whom his hearers, however blindly or falteringly, antecedently believed. Accordingly the traditional creeds, and the classical theological tractates, demand an acceptance of the reality of God before positing any statement about Jesus. Possibly this is Dr. Robinson's complaint; but to invert the order here is to uphold what he deplores, "the divided house of faith and reason." The way is open to an irrational fideism and to a curtailment of the larger implications of Christianity.

And yet there is a sense in which the Bishop of Woolwich is right. If the "ultimate reality" we call God is to be believed in, He must in some way be experienced. In his later book the Bishop says, "I welcome, rather than fear, the sympathy with which much that I said in *Honest to God* has been received by many within the Hindu and Buddhist traditions." This is a clue that he would do well to follow. Such a course might suggest a way to modify his fears that "the biblical, liturgical, and ecumenical movement of our time," if unaccompanied by a "new Reformation," "could strengthen the Church against the world rather than release it for the world." The religious insights stemming from India, being separable from Hindu and Buddhist institutions, as I

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have tried to show elsewhere,[4] may offer Christians something more substantial than the inter-denominational "dialogue" which has lately become fashionable.

ROMAN CATHOLIC theologians have shown some awareness of these possibilities, but their approach is still largely missionary with proselytising overtones. Thus in this as yet limited *genre*, Henri de Lubac's non-comprehension of Buddhism could scarcely be more complete. What needs to be faced is the fact of the divine *immanence*, the indwelling of God within every human spirit, which is a doctrine of orthodox Catholicism—though not much discussed in clerical circles, as it rather leaves in the shade religious ritual and priestly activity in general. It is at this level, I believe, where man can become experientially and even blissfully aware of the very Ground of his existence, that an answer to Dr. Robinson's questioning is to be found—as he himself, though not with sufficient clarity, perceives.

Despite Cardinal Bea's assurances to him that "the Counter-Reformation is over," its influence, in terms of a response to Protestantism, has dominated the Vatican Council and the minds of its theologians. Both Biblical historicism and the existentialist emphasis in the Church's new theology have been learnt, commendably enough, from the heirs of the Reformation. It should be remembered, however, that Catholicism is not essentially a "religion of the book"; it lays claim to supra-temporal dimensions, and these do not always accord with a strictly historical interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. This was recognised by the early Church Fathers, who had recourse to Hellenistic wisdom in the ensuing difficulties. Rational philosophy is as integral a part of Catholic tradition as are the inspired Scriptures.

Biblical theology and some form of existentialism have a mutual affinity—witness Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf Bultmann, who effect the combination with impressive results. This is particularly true of Tillich, whose mind is much too powerful and wide-ranging to be labelled merely existentialist. But when Catholics attempt the same approach the upshot is usually disappointing and conveys an impression of theological "me-tooism." The reason is not far to seek. Central to the Protestant tradition is the dramatic Creator-creature "encounter" which so impressed Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, as it had Luther before him. God's transcendence, His striking "vertically downwards" (in Barth's phrase) is an aspect of the human condition to be taken account of in any form of Christianity. With expositors of the Catholic tradition, however, the dramatics may suitably be toned down. God, as has been noted, is not only transcendent but immanent within the Church and each of its members. To know about Jesus we have to study the New Testament, but to find Him we must enter within our own spirit. The Catholic emphasis is not on making existential "decisions," as stressed for instance by Bultmann, but on achieving a quality of being, a state of grace, linked with a contemplative awareness so responsive to reality that the decisions make themselves.

AN ELEMENT in the Vatican Council's inevitable pathos, as it seems to me, was transferred only the other day to the theological front. It took the form of a papal condemnation of an attempt to modify a key term—"transubstantiation" by "transignification"—in the Roman Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist. The proposed re-phrasing had much to be said for it, but it was considered by those chiefly responsible as likely to mislead the faithful and so, reasonably enough, disallowed. The incident illustrates rather sadly what can happen to theologians concerned to "dovetail" their ideas to the needs of pastors—or perhaps it was the other way around! The Eucharist is central to Catholic ritual, but in the total Christian scheme of things it cannot demand our first consideration. "God," "love," "neighbour," as recorded of Christianity's Founder, constitute the root of the matter. But these tend to be taken in their stride by the new theologians, as they hasten forward to expatiate on the Church and its sacraments. Had the mental energy applied to these remoter matters been devoted to elucidating themes Christians are most eager to hear about: Who is God? What is love? How about my neighbour?—we should have heard nothing of any condemnation and doubtless been much the wiser.

Here a point made by Tillich is worth pondering. "Religion is not a special function of man's

[4] In my *Zen Catholicism—A Suggestion* (1964, London: Collins; New York: Harcourt, Brace & World).

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spiritual life, but it is the dimension of depth in all of its functions." The Council will reform and adapt to the modern world as best it may the Church's juridical structure; but the much-to-be-desired liberating of the individual conscience depends upon an experience of enlightenment at the purely personal level. It is to be hoped that there will appear upon the scene a different breed of theologians, not professional ecclesiologists but philosophers equipped to discuss the real problems facing organised Christianity in today's world. These problems call for far more fundamental answers than biblical theology or existentialist thinking can provide. The need is not for another *Summa Theologica,* but for what should be in substance a prolegomenon to any future presentation of Catholicism. Three preliminary questions will, I believe, call for discussion in such an enquiry.

First, the question of epistemology: What can we know for certain? What is the relation between knowledge (including religious beliefs) in our minds and the realities such knowledge purports to represent? No satisfying rational account of what we may apprehend of God can be given without some answer to these queries. Secondly, the question of verbal statement: How accurately do words represent things or ideas? On our knowing this depends, for example, the importance we attach to anything the Council may have to say. Thirdly, the general philosophical question: does each man, in the manner of Descartes, have to make a fresh start in the quest for wisdom? Correspondingly, must there be a new theology to meet the needs of each succeeding generation? Or is there a body of acquired knowledge, a "perennial philosophy," on which simply as reasonable beings we may safely rely? Can Aldous Huxley, whose mind had a wisdom of its own, be shown to be wrong when he described the *philosophia perennis* as

> ... the metaphysic that recognises a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being?

The Vatican Council, I have suggested, has an element of pathos; but so has every demonstration of heavenly treasure being carried in an earthen vessel. Harnack (I think it was) has observed that only a small minority can attune their spirits to the real implications of a universal religion; the majority are content "to hurl their spears and honour the Gods." To-day the spears are likely to turn into atom bombs. To what effective degree a world-wide assembly of Christian bishops are able, or will use their influence, to avert that catastrophe remains to be seen. Tempted as we might be to do so, it seems well not to lose sight of the conclusion reached by Friedrich von Hügel, in his *The Mystical Element of Religion* (1909):

> Never has religion been purely and entirely individual; always has it been, as truly and necessarily, social and institutional, traditional and historical. And this traditional element, not all the religious genius in the world can ever escape or replace: it was there, surrounding and moulding the very pre-natal existence of each of us; it will be there, long after we have left the scene. We live and die its wise servants and stewards, or its blind slaves, or in futile, impoverishing revolt against it: we never, for good or for evil, really get beyond its reach.

The final verdict to be pronounced on the second Vatican Council by the sophisticated onlooker could take the form of Alphonse Karr's familiar comment, *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.* Not a few, both within and without the Church, appear to prefer it that way.

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Stephen Spender

Poem

If it were not for that
Lean executioner, who stands
Ever beyond a door
With axe raised in both hands—

All my days here would seem
One day—the same—the drops
Of light diffused in light
That no circumference stops.

Mountain, star and flower
One with the eye seeing
Would, gone from sight, melt back again
Into their separate being:

Nor would I hoard against
The obliterating desert
Their camera oscura
Glittering on the heart.

My hand would never move
To follow into stone
Hair the wind lines on a frieze
One moment, and then gone.

What gives edge to remembering
Is death. It's that shows, curled
Within each falling moment
A self, a dying world.

The girl came in the garden
And walking through deep flowers, held up
Our child who, smiling down at her,
Clung to her throat, a cup.

Clocks notch such instances
On time: no time that keeps,
Beyond the eye's delight,
Losses for which it weeps.

I chisel memories
Within a shadowy room,
Transmuting slips of light to ships
Launched into a tomb.

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The Kipling Conundrum

By John Bayley

KIPLING was absorbed by—or perhaps rather disintegrated by—his age, with more evident completeness than we can forgive a great writer for being, or accept that he should be, if we are to think of him as a great writer. He did not quite belong to it; for though his temperament and views were those of a great many other persons of his class and kind he expressed with a disconcertingly direct enthusiasm what they took for granted. He was too much for the Group to be of it. And his understanding of a society is masked by the terrible exuberance of his determination not to be outside it. Exile, silence, and cunning were not for him.

He did indeed take *himself* for granted—it was his only kind of reticence—and he lacks the gift that many smaller writers have of apprehending the contradictions in themselves and of imagining them, by this example, in others. He has to schematise such a process (as with the Lama in *Kim*) in terms of a religion to which he can feel wholly and safely sympathetic because it is so far removed from the needs of Sahibdom. The Lama has to be a Tibetan, of an exotically unknown and therefore uninferior race, just as Kim has to be of white parentage on both sides. They are excused that total participation in a society which inspired his real interest, his admiration, or his contempt.

He is a genius who insisted—over-insisted—on being an artist. But it is doubtful if it is worth the critic's while to talk much about his "art," any more than about the art of Dickens or D. H. Lawrence, who make no bones about their disregard for it in Kipling's inkhorn sense. All three were essentially daemonic in temperament (though Kipling preferred to think his Daemon lived outside him, not inside). Whatever the difference in achievement and outlook this daemonic involvement which they share reveals itself by contrast with the detachment—in their equally varying ways—of a Hardy or George Eliot, a Conrad or Joyce. Appraisal of such daemonic genius can never pretend to detachment either. The subject is too big and too lively: the critic can neither calmly sum up nor incisively pin down. It is as difficult, and perhaps as unprofitable, for him to get outside Kipling as it was for Kipling to get outside packs and societies.

Most of us have been exposed to him young and reacted against him, so that criticism becomes like the record of a family quarrel. There is great charm in watching our eminent men of letters gravely extending the hand of reconciliation to old Uncle Rudyard, the black sheep of their youth. Historians and anniversarists come to bury Kipling, like Lawrence, with modified praise, but love and hate in some ways suit him better than the sensible technical discussion for which Dr. Tompkins's full-length study was notable, as is Professor Bodelsen's more recent book.[1] The instruction they offer is that of the planning clinic rather than the marriage bed. Perhaps indeed the young, if they read him at all—and the evidence suggests some do—will read him in this way, indifferent to the tremors of pleasure and disgust that he once roused. No doubt for many of them Auden's "horrible old Kipling" is merely square—his idiom a curiosity from the quaint past, like Sherlock Holmes. But, as with all daemonic authors, the relation of Kipling to his public does matter. Professor Bodelsen is extremely helpful about how the stories work, and what happens in them, but he does not tell us *why* we respond to them as we do, if we still do.

A NEW COLLECTION of critical essays[2] reprints Edmund Wilson's classic chapter from *The*

[1] *Aspects of Kipling's Art.* By C. A. BODELSEN. Manchester University Press, 25s.

[2] *Kipling's Mind & Art.* Essays edited by Andrew Rutherford. Oliver & Boyd, 35s.

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Wound and The Bow, George Orwell's spirited use of Kipling in his campaign against the liberal stock response, Lionel Trilling's cautious apologia, a remarkable essay by Noel Annan—the most informative in the book—on Kipling's place in the history of ideas; and a number of specially written pieces, all of which add to our sense of the scope and diversity of Kipling's work. None pretends to be definitive except for the Edmund Wilson reprint; and though this remains the best single thing written about Kipling its assumptions no longer carry us all the way with them. For Wilson the case can be explained in terms of childhood traumas and adult dramas—such as the row with the brother-in-law—down to the last saving diminishment of his son's death and the decline of Empire. But Kipling is too big to present a "case" in the way that Wilde or Hemingway could be said to do. He pops up all over the place, even among the young Soviet intelligentsia, offering—in spite of the limitations of his style and *genres*—a kind of "God's plenty," something for everybody, in the way which we associate with "the sanity of true genius" in the past. Certainly he lacks the still centre of that sanity. But in drawing our attention to this, we may feel that Edmund Wilson contrasts him with writers who exhibit—so to speak—the wrong kind of stillness.

> Kipling *had* terribly shrunk.... Whereas Yeats was playing out superbly the last act of a personal drama which he had sustained unembarrassed by public events, and Henry James was now seen in retrospect to have accomplished, in his long career, a prodigy of disinterested devotion to an art and a criticism of life.

WHAT DID Wilson mean by a *personal* drama? Yeats remained always on the same spot, manipulating his style. If we compare his rhetorical query: "*Did that play of mine send out/ Certain men the English shot?*" with Kipling's life and the relation between his work and his time, it is difficult to take Yeats seriously. Only a man irremediably on the outside could ask such a question. Wilson implies that Yeats and Henry James retained their integrity by courage and sacrifice, while Kipling surrendered and gave in to the prevailing *mores* and paid the penalty for doing so.

The truth is, surely, that all three acted as they had to do, but the limitations are not on Kipling's side. He was a highly vulnerable man, but not unintelligently vulnerable. The loss of his son and daughter; his knowledge of hatred and vindictiveness and of their inevitability in any social group; his sense of social involvement and unfreedom, with its concurrent and often rather gruesome inability to let us outside himself and his world; his sense of attachment and forbearance, not as moral qualities or enlightened opinions, but as dull and absolute needs like the need to respect order and be some kind of snob—these are the marks of Kipling's progress, as of so much human progress, in which perhaps, as Kipling puts it, "hearts, like muddy streams, cleanse themselves as they go forward." Beside the extreme human participation of Kipling—or what Orwell called the "vulgar and permanent" in him—it is the outsideness of Yeats and James which may appear limiting, rather than devoted and noble. James might indeed have smiled wryly at Wilson's compliment. Like the hero of his story *The Beast in The Jungle*, he knew his fate to be emptiness, not by reason of a noble abstinence but because of his own egoism: that was the way he was. *Dayspring Mishandled* resembles James' story in its bleak and subtle portrayal of the inability to be other than oneself: Manallace refrains from consummating his triumph, not through a free and virtuous moral choice—such things do not exist in Kipling's world—but because as an artist he cannot bear to see his work collapsed into the triviality of life. The sympathy between James and the young Kipling reveals a real kinship between their apprehension as artists. All Kipling's characters are as naturally, as inadvertently unfree as James comes to make Densher in *The Wings of The Dove* or Charlotte in *The Golden Bowl*. But as James' famous criticism of his development suggests, the unfreedom of Kipling's characters is that of beasts in a pack or parts in a machine—"the engines and the screws"—whereas that of his own is the outcome of a lifetime's pondering and perceiving a society from the outside.

In a most suggestive essay on Kipling's later stories, Mr W. W. Robson makes the point that his art

> does not in any very obvious sense show development.... Masterpieces as assured as anything he ever wrote can be found, at any period of his work, side by side with very inferior things; and yet on these inferior things the same minuteness of skill and care seems to have been expended.

This is certainly the vital clue, but Mr. Robson does not make the deduction. The badness, inferiority, which he dismisses, is of unique importance in Kipling; it is not just, as with other artists, feebleness, failure, loss of control, but is as essential—in and for his art—as the "goodness." Kipling's progress cannot therefore be one of eliminating the bad and developing the good. Right at the end, in *Limits and Renewals*, we find together with *Dayspring Mishandled* what Mr. Robson calls "so unpleasant and negligible a piece" as *The Tie*, in which a

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fraudulent contractor of the 1914 war is only saved from violence at the hands of some young officers by the old school tie he wears. We may not like the tale, but what is behind it is as complex as what appears in *Dayspring Mishandled*. Negligible is not a word we can apply to Kipling, for the bad in him is not only as artful but as unselfconscious as the good, and each depends on the other. T. S. Eliot's comment about "the pleasure of exploring a mind so very different from my own" is helpful here. Kipling's fascination for us is that of a compartmented mind, of a kind familiar to us in our experience of living but not often met with in great writers (though both Milton and Dickens might be taken as instances of it). Contradictions and prejudices, impulses like vindictiveness and forbearance, do not meet and examine one another in him: they rather maintain a separate and equalising pressure on his creative temperament. Yet though we are constantly aware in all the stories and characters of Kipling as an overwhelming presence, it is a presence that does not necessarily weigh on us as that of more enlightened writers may do. The compartments seem to act like a modern equivalent of what Keats called "negative capability"—Kipling could certainly feel with an Iago and an Imogen, with a Learoyd and a Liza Roantree, but except possibly in tales like *On Greenhow Hill* (which Mr. J. H. Fenwick and Mr. Andrew Rutherford discuss in perceptive detail) the need to hate and to love don't appear to recognise each other. To draw a crude parallel, he sometimes reminds us of a loving father who votes for hanging and flogging.

THIS ABSENCE OF ANY connective process gives a kind of play of natural drama to Kipling's world, but it makes it very difficult for the critic to tot up his score as a constructive imagination. In his essay on *Vision in Kipling's Novels*, Mr. Mark Kinkead-Weekes tries to do just this, and though the attempt is an interesting one it does not somehow seem quite real. When he tells us that in *Kim* "a disabling criticism" is passed on the Great Game of secret-service work by means of the Lama and the Babu, he seems to me to have been reading a different author, nor does he quite persuade me that after *The Light that Failed* Kipling's moral vision expanded and enlarged, in *Captains Courageous* and *Kim*, to see through and to enclose his subject. Wouldn't one simply say that the difference is in the subject-matter of the three? *The Light that Failed* certainly acquires its memorable and daemonic character from its closeness to young Kipling himself, and Mr. Kinkead-Weekes' criticism of it is interesting. "There is an attempt to contain Dick within a broader vision," he says. "But *that* is the light that failed most disastrously. Kipling cannot finally see beyond his own private agonies and violences." Isn't it just the strength of the book that he does not? If Kipling were outside the war between men and women he describes it would not be the gruesomely compelling thing it is. The moral perspective—if one has to call it that—is quite different in *Captains Courageous*, because it is a quite different kind of book, and together with *Kim* the one in which Kipling is least personally involved.

But Mr. Kinkead-Weekes is admirable on the structure of *Captains Courageous* and how it is built on the view from the liner and the view from the dory. The success story of Harvey's father, he reminds us, is described as "like watching a locomotive storming across country in the dark," and he feels that this "places" the achievement of the capitalist in relation to the more solid worth of Disko Troop, the banks skipper. To an acute ear the metaphor certainly does so, but I doubt whether Kipling put the imputation there himself: for him the image of the night express would be one of pure creation and romance, as in *007*. Kipling's lack of such a placing and assigning vision seems to me his greatest if his most alarming asset, for those who have it cannot help but be like "the butterfly upon the road," while he puts himself with "the toad beneath the harrow" who cannot afford a moral perspective as he gets on with his job.

SUPPOSE that job to be gassing Jews? That would be all one to Kipling according to C. S. Lewis, who in his essay *The Inner Ring* (which could not be included in this symposium) suggested that Kipling's group preoccupation is totally amoral, and that provided he could feel he was in it he would not care what its aims and methods were. Lewis hated Kipling wholeheartedly, and this is certainly an ingenious way of rationalising his hatred, but it ignores the implications of the fact that Kipling is not interested in moral principles considered academically. Is it wrong to hunt, to hang, to regard black men as inferiors? Involvement in actual situations, implies Kipling, dissolves and solves such queries. It is by no means a satisfactory line to take, but our familiarity with his masonic groups, whose worth he stridently preaches but whose real virtues (like those of Disko Troop, Mulvaney, McPhee, or "William") his daemon involuntarily but effectively reveals, must at least show the absurdity of C. S. Lewis' point. The kind of systematic horrors which C. S. Lewis has in mind, and which Kipling did not live to see, are not the result of an Inner Ring muddling along and

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enjoying its innerness, but precisely of the theoretical and abstract ideas which the daemon disowns. "The Jews are the trouble with Europe, therefore eliminate them" is a piece of pseudo-connection which would have revolted him as much as anyone. In his work there are no solutions, final or otherwise.

Of course he can be awful—that goes without saying. And his awfulness can be enhanced by devious techniques and ingenious clues, "overlaid tints and textures" as he tells us in the Burne-Jones picture vocabulary he uses about literary art, "which might or might not reveal themselves according to the shifting light of sex, youth, and experience." Professor Bodelsen shows how in one of the South African stories, *The Comprehension of Private Copper*, clues are planted to show Sahibs in the know that the young renegade Boer of English descent has come to resemble a Eurasian, in speech and appearance, because the true Boers have denied him political rights and treated him as an inferior being. For Kipling (as for Lord Milner) this was the crux of the case against the Boers, and Professor Bodelsen points out that the verses called *The Old Issue* introduce a sexual motif that the story completes. "Deeper strikes the rottenness in the people's loins," because as helots they lose self-respect, and with it the will to power and the continuation of race. The lack of moral logic provides a sort of deliberate challenge. Why, after all, is it wrong for the Boers to treat English *uitlanders* as an inferior class, and right for the English to do the same in India to natives and Eurasians? Why, in a yet more notorious story, is it right for our airmen to drop bombs on Germans and wrong for the Germans to do the same to us? Of course there is no answer, and Kipling does not pretend there is; unlike racial theorists he never tries to justify himself—the feeling of the tribe is what counts. But equally, of course, we ask the question, because the stories demand that we do, or rather—by reason of their complex emotional artistry—*cannot help us doing*. In Lawrence's phrase, we can trust the tale and not the teller. Nowhere has Kipling more negative capability than in these richly disturbing and disconcerting stories. The Puck series, where the "tints and textures" are all methodically and dispassionately overlaid, are lifeless in comparison. But light here is not shed from outside—it dawns inside the locked compartments of fear and prejudice which the daemon makes us enter, and it is arguable that the more apparently awful the stories, the further they reach in our hearts and minds, if we let them.

As Noel Annan convincingly argues, Kipling's interest in what holds society together resembles that of the continental sociologists of his time, like Emile Durkheim and Max Weber. He is not concerned with religion, patriotism, and group loyalty as matters that are true or justified, but with how and in what ways they work (this gives C. S. Lewis' thesis its initial plausibility). Thus he is one of the very few imaginative writers who are more concerned with sex in its social manifestations than in its impact on the individual. He is deeply aware of the part it plays, as we have now come to realise, in racial fears and hatreds, and the forms it may take in times of group crisis and social disintegration. *Private Copper* shows this, but in *Mary Postgate* we experience it far more subtly and intensively, for Private Copper is a soldier of straw and Mary Postgate is very much a real woman. She is one of the few exceptions to the general truth that Kipling is only good at portraying groups and representatives of groups, not individuals, and his normal indifference and even cruelty to the mere "thisness" of a person makes the exceptions decidedly startling. (There seems to be a very close link, incidentally, between his *tone* and his treatment of character. A writer who sees his creations as individuals usually sees his reader as one. With Tolstoy and Lawrence, for instance, we feel that their penetrating analysis of a personality extends in a sense to us; we seem to be *alone* with them and the experience is a stimulating one, even if sometimes alarming or exasperating. But Kipling is remorselessly unintimate. With him we are never alone but always one of a group, and it is this more than anything else which defines his characteristic vulgarity, his insensitivity to the reactions of what is individual in us. Like certain kinds of raconteur and journalist he is all too oblivious to anything but a hypothetical group response. He is interested not in the person or the fact, but only in "the story.")

Mary Postgate, however, is both person and social phenomenon, an achievement which Mr. Robson emphasises in his comment that the best stories are uncannily good at giving us "the distillation of a life" (which is far from the pretension of *Une Vie*, in spite of Kipling's debt to Maupassant). The key to the tale, as in *The Wish House* (and also in de la Mare's best stories), is that it remains unclear how much—in particular the climactic act of cruelty—happens in fact, and how much in Mary's mind. "One mustn't let one's mind dwell on these things," says Mary (Kipling discreetly emphasises the phrase by repetition), and that is precisely why it does, and why the fantasy is so powerful. When young Wynn, her employer's nephew, is killed flying, Mary has what amounts to a nervous breakdown, but being Mary ("I've no imagination I'm afraid." . . . "As

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Wynn says, I haven't the mind") it takes a strange form. (The play upon *mind* is almost Shakespearean—"Postey doesn't mind," says Wynn, after a particularly unfeeling jest at her expense.) Wynn's multitudinous effects are to be burnt after his death, and Mary goes to the village for paraffin to light the garden incinerator. An aeroplane is heard, a shed is knocked down, and a little girl fatally injured. Mary takes it for granted it was a German bomb (Wynn had pointed out to her the bomb-racks on his own machine), but the doctor overtakes her on the way home and tells her the shed collapsed from dry rot. She doesn't believe him and it seems unlikely that he believes himself—uncertainty is the climate of war. Mary then goes down the garden to the incinerator, finds a German airman who has apparently fallen from his plane, and lets him die while with closed eyes "she drew her breath between her teeth and shuddered from head to foot." She then has a bath and is found by her employer relaxed and "quite handsome" upon the sofa.

IT IS NOT surprising that this extraordinary story, which sees so much and touches so many nerves of war, sex, love, neurosis, and repression, should have been denounced as it was and should have had to wait so long for proper recognition. It is one of the very few in which the craft elements—compression, detail, symbolism, a wholly effectual ambiguity—not only pan out exactly, but are filled with a depth of sympathy and experience—we are so used to the feeling that Kipling in fact knows *less* than he pretends to about his subject that it is a shock to receive the opposite impression. It has been customary for apologists of the tale to point out that Kipling is not indicating that this is how the Germans should be treated, but how some people in the war, "when the English began to hate," felt about the Germans. There is some truth in this, but it is not the whole story, nor would the creation involved be so remarkable if it were. Mr. Robson is nearer the mark when he observes that critics who detect the genesis of Kipling's cruelty in the experiences of *Ba Ba Black Sheep* ignore the element of self-diagnosis in that tale. Kipling is clearly very close to Mary Postgate—in fact for him at just the right distance. As himself, as Punch, he was hampered by group and parental loyalties, for he was as scrupulously loyal and reticent in art as in life and never lets us know what he might have thought of his parents' "desertion." (We might compare this refusal to free himself in art from what held him in life with the way Dickens treated his mother in *Nicholas Nickleby*.) Entering the character of Mary his daemon can lift the lid with impunity, to liberate and to expiate itself through fantasies which we all share at some level, and which art turns into the equivocally real.

The triumph of the story is that Mary is a good woman, and comes across as such, in spite of what she does, or imagines she does. She recovers and finds release through an act of cruelty in which she both possesses and exorcises Wynn himself through his *alter ego*, the German airman.[3] And not only Wynn. In the most uncomfortable touch of the story the dying airman looks at Mary with the same expression—a drawing down of the mouth—as the little girl torn by the bomb. The war point here is clear enough: but for the childless woman there is also the power over something helpless and hers—the unappeasable maternal force unable not to find this a mode of satisfaction. One must emphasise again that this is not wilfully macabre. Mary is a good woman, whose unfulfilment in peace is as noble and useful as her fulfilment in war is hateful and degrading. Kipling's fine sense of and respect for such persons is shown by Nurse Blaber of *In the Same Boat*, who says: "I don't need anything, thank you, and if I did I shouldn't get it." And the effect of the story, fully digested, is as heartening and satisfying as the release of truth in good art must be.

PROBABLY NO ONE but Kipling could have pulled it off, for no one could be less suspected of doing it "for art's sake," or as an objective study in sadistic neurosis. He is not a detached writer, but he achieves here despite himself both detachment and intimacy. Yet in the verses at the end about "how the English began to hate," it seems as if he is deliberately suppressing the intimacy and returning to his pack *persona*. Their assertiveness is like a way of covering up. And his verse in general has this distressing characteristic: it is noticeable that the frequent snatches of verse and song in the stories (like that at the end of *With the Main Guard*) often act like a jolly tribal intrusion at some interesting moment. Kipling is apt to be uneasy about his best things and thoroughly confident about his worst ones, perhaps because they never give anything away. With all its nudges and intentions, its building up of the way we are to respond, his more overpowering craftsmanship can be strangely unconscious of the way we actually *do* respond. In *A Habitation Enforced* it is Kipling who misses the point—which is that the impression

[3] In *Eight Modern Writers* (*Oxford History of English Literature* series), Mr. J. I. M. Stewart makes an interesting conjecture about the relation of Mary to Wynn.

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Americans get of England can be wholly misleading and self-induced—not us. And alongside the masterpieces of real revelation come the snow-images, simulacra of pseudo-revelation like *They*. Mr. Robson admires this story, perhaps because its tone is so palpably good and humane, but this is no criterion with Kipling. He makes points about bereavement—"bearing and losing come so alike in the long run"—with a confidence that only shows how well he has covered his tracks—it is something he can be expansive about, as if in the smoking room. However genuine the feeling the effect is of patronage and a subtle kind of insincerity. The unreality of the props seems a consequence of this fatal thematic assurance. The country house, the topiaried yews, the butler, the famous panorama of Sussex, are backdrops and wax-works, complete down to the last twig and moustache hair but without the cohesiveness of life. At ease in the workshop of his twinkling skills, Kipling is quite oblivious of our unease. Even *The Gardener* (which Edmund Wilson thinks his best) suffers from a discovered device to which he can openly hand himself over. The cemetery is marvellously done, in his best manner, but the possibility that the gardener, who shows Helen Turrell where her son lies, is Christ, is of course no ambiguity at all: it is merely Kipling putting himself and us in other hands. The story is so nearly very moving that the effect is a particularly frustrating one. Possibly he had the biblical device—which he works most relentlessly in the two Pauline tales—from George Moore as well as from Browning and the French; and it is imitated from him in turn —dreadfully—by Hemingway ("So I put in the old spear" etc). The line of imitation is not reassuring. By contrast, it is impossible to supply a literary origin for *Mary Postgate*, and equally impossible to think of its being copied.

AND YET oddly enough the result of such failures is to make us admire Kipling more, not less. It is incredible that the same man should have written it all—the hoaxes, the mechanical stories, the parables of healing, the meticulous monologues, *Stalky* and *Kim*, the *History of the Irish Guards in the Great War*, and an immense volume of verse, as well as the strange masterpieces like *Mary Postgate*, *Mrs. Bathhurst*, and *The Wish House*. He may not be great, as his age was not great, but like it he is certainly big. Both good and bad in him are equally compulsive, and it is only by enjoying the bad that we can come to appreciate fully the good. However immediately recognisable the style and the man behind it, the range and breadth of interest are amazing; he is always capable of startling us and capable too, as Mr. Robson points out, "of showing the other side of a theme which interested him." With all this, the strange thing is how dismally inadequate and yet intrusive are his theories of art. There are moments when they seem for children, who delight in the magician's compelling and "perspicuous eye" and on the conjuror's insistence on the knick-knacks in his hand. The feeling of the expulsion of the real by the meticulous is enjoyable in its way, as it is with certain pre-Raphaelites, but it marries with fatal facility with Kipling's journalistic skill.

The worst effect, as I have already suggested, is on character; and a sentence in *They* about "cross-sections of remote and incomprehensible lives through which we raced at right-angles," gives us the clue to the process. With us in tow he is continually crossing other lives at right-angles: it is the real reason for his failure in the novel. When stuck with Mahbub Ali, Disko Troop, etc., he retains them in the stance in which we first met them—he has none of the gift which turns such people into their larger selves without the direct supervision of the author. His names seldom *belong* to their characters—they are like words for parts of machines. (In a bizarre sense, too, his relation with his characters can be *too* like life—too like, that is to say, the attitude that he and the group would have taken to them in life.) This means we cannot give in wholly to him, or indeed trust him at all, even when he tells us that only three people in the world can both draw and expound The Great Wheel, or that a good shot will always get his man with a Martini-Henry at 700 yards. The nemesis of journalism is that a fact is only true for a moment, where the reader and the alleged truth intersect. Often, we feel, what happened afterwards is no affair of Kipling's.

AFTER THIS LAPSE of time, we can accept the tricks and conventions in *Kim* and the earlier stories more openly than Kipling himself did. He can be irritating in affecting extreme realism while in fact making use of every hoary old literary device—the eavesdroppings, the coincidences and clumsily picaresque journey sequences, the dialogues that explain for our benefit aspects of his characters' lives which they would in fact have taken for granted. Many Indians enjoy *Kim* because it reminds them of Eng.Lit. rather than India—there is an undeniable charm in the imposition of our traditional literary methods on the enormous and passive void of the subcontinent. The India of *Kim* is like a vast well-equipped nursery full of benevolent mothers and fathers who are really all the same figure, whether they are prostitutes, Himalayan women, healers of sick pearls, or Colonels in the Secret

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Service. And the gentler spirit of Lockwood Kipling pervades his son's book. But it seems beside the point to claim an overt humanity and philosophic intention for Kipling on the strength of the Lama and Buddhism. We might remember with what approval he quoted Lord Dufferin's dictum: "There can be no room for good intentions in one's work."

The remarkable contrast with the world of *Kim* comes in such an early tale as *The Strange Ride of Morrowbie Jukes*, which conveys less insistently—and hence perhaps more involuntarily—than any other the horror and emptiness that Kipling found in India, as in life and himself, and fought off all he could. His real fear of it, which sometimes expresses itself in a let-up of insistence, and of what I have called his fatal thematic assurance, makes such things in a way more perturbing than the carefully contrived presentation of the discovery of emptiness by Conrad or E. M. Forster. In *The Man Who Would Be King*, in the same collection as the *The Strange Ride*, Kipling is himself again, dashing off a fine rousing day-dream of acquisitive power. One is the weak Kipling; the other the strong; both are equally good, but in the contrast is the secret of his power over himself and us. It is a most graphic artistic analogue of the human state, between the sense that *il n'y a pas de signe dans le monde* and the determination to *make* "signs," to create a strong society with what Mr. Alan Sandison (who quotes Sartre's phrase) calls "all the paraphernalia of self-reassurance." There is no doubt that Edmund Wilson's diagnosis was right, and that Kipling's answer to his weakness was to join the strong, but the implication of this is larger than a mere political one. The weak have no signs, and Kipling (to quote Mr. Sandison again) "is firmly resolved that signs there will be." Of course, now that these existentialist notions are popularised they build up their own structure of mental stability and even complacence. Accepted, they neither stimulate nor horrify us but have a rather soothing effect. But between the Victorian age and our own Kipling was experiencing them rather than reading about them.

"IT MUST mean something," says Professor Bodelsen of an apparently random detail in one of the stories. He might be echoing Kipling himself. Yet some of the later stories may represent an attempt to shed meaning in his usual exacting sense: the sheer ingenuity of their form becomes, as it were, incapable of delivering it, and Kipling seems on the verge of admitting this. Colonel Browne of the Kipling Society, quoted by Professor Bodelsen, suggested that *Mrs. Bathhurst* is a deliberate hoax, a story full of clues which are not meant to make sense. (Kipling and the Colonel, one feels, might well have had a good chuckle together over this before Kipling slid off the topic and started the Colonel on his reminiscences.) But Kipling's passion for humour is normally an aspect of his passion for meaning—we laugh because there is something to laugh *at*, and the point of the hoax is its *dénouement*. Why this humour makes us feel uncomfortable is that we are given a really exorbitant amount to laugh at: the more elaborate the jest, the more thick with banana skins and burnt cork, the more we shall deliver ourselves—as the English do—"unreservedly to mirth." ("Who but Kipling would write a brag about English understatement?" asks Lionel Trilling, and who but he could shame us with the notion of a national sense of humour?) In *Mrs. Bathhurst* there can be no hoax because the chain of significance is abruptly snapped off, and we are left with the enormous indifference of the world and the pathetic isolation of human wishes. Distances and random contacts are the imagination of the tale. It is narrated in a damaged railway-truck in a siding by the bleached dunes of a South African beach; and it jumps from New Zealand to Vancouver Island, Tristan da Cunha, Paddington, and a Rhodesian teak forest. This geographical idiocy is paralleled by the idiotic repetition of Mrs. Bathhurst, with her "blindish look," walking towards Vickery on the flickering cinema screen and vanishing in the foreground "like a shadow jumping over a candle." (I entirely agree with Professor Bodelsen's brilliant conjecture that she is already dead when Vickery sees her, caught by chance in one of the earliest feature films—and that Vickery knows it: there are no ghosts except in films and photographs.) The final jolt of unmeaning is the finding of Vickery's charred corpse with another corpse beside it, and though the audience are impressed by the apparent weird significance of this find the story itself is not—the *story* knows the other corpse is not Mrs. Bathhurst but a casual tramp. It is a remarkable instance of Kipling's ability as an artist to turn the tables on himself and us. But, of course, unmeaning is not smart—it is not the *point*. Brief as it is, the story is a genuine tragedy, for though she is mocked by unmeaning Mrs. Bathhurst, like Mary Postgate, remains a real and sympathetic woman—a great woman. Through what seems a *reductio ad absurdum* of the "right angle" technique, the distant and flickering picture of her which is all we have somehow achieves that sense of "a distillation of a life," which Mr. Robson notes.

THESE FINE PORTRAITS of women in the best stories do provide something like the centre

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of truth otherwise so lacking in his work, the absence of which—even though we can read him over and over with pleasure—does give it the bright fixity of an exhibit, something that delights the eye but will never move again. A centre of truth is a centre of growth, and they have the extension and growth of being which we associate with a masterpiece, instead of the typical Kipling effect of a machine intricately assembled *in situ*. Cancer, too, becomes a strangely life-giving thing for him, almost as if the contemplation of this final unmeaning in the flesh helped to bring him back from "the engines and the screws" to human nature and to what is most touching and perturbing in its fate.

Yet even here we have to remember the compartmented side of him, for the theme of cancer is as vulgarised in *The Children of the Zodiac* as that of mother love in *The Brushwood Boy*. If only Kipling was *real* is our ultimate reaction to these puzzles: if only one could be sure there is somebody there! And we are left reflecting on the difference between the protean being of a Shakespeare, whose anonymity only makes one more confident of a clear and central presence, and the Kipling equivalent of being "all things to all men." Though we may not want to recognise it in Kipling's version, this type of literary and social anonymity may perhaps, none the less, be becoming increasingly true of modern life. Many types of art now depend on Kipling's evasion of individual communication—advertising and public relations work through jargon and group-words. It is significant that the most coherent anti-Kipling literary ethos—Bloomsbury—valued above all things individual and personal communication, and it is Bloomsbury rather than Kipling that has lost out in our world.

WITH ALL THIS elaborate business of tints and textures, Chinese inks and so forth, did Kipling ultimately accept art as, like advertising, a *fraudulent* activity? But if so, what is the purpose of the fraud? There is no reply, because Kipling cannot talk to us directly: he can only communicate with us by fraudulent means. In *Something of Myself* he says that the nature of his work—"to realise all sorts and conditions of men and make others realise them—gave me no time to 'realise' myself." So much the better for me, the tone implies. And yet "to thine own self be true"... the author of *If* might have pondered the conclusion of that even more celebrated platitude. The late and moving poem on St. Paul, *At His Execution*, suggests that he came to do so.

> I was made all things to all men,
> But now my course is done—
> And now is my reward—
> Ah, Christ, when I stand at Thy Throne
> With those I have drawn to the Lord,
> Restore me my self again!

St. Paul and General Booth (who had told the youthful Kipling that he would play a tambourine with his toes to win a soul to the Lord) are hardly the artist's ideal sponsors. Yet Kipling so often strikes us as on the verge of personal disintegration, and refers to it obliquely in his work, that he may indeed have felt—as might the Methodist ministers who were his grandfathers on both sides—that he had given himself to give us the truth, to make us more aware of national and imperial destiny. There is an element of tragedy in this, for seldom has a mission more oddly miscarried. One can only say that the self which may appear in many of the later stories is one to which it would seem worth while to be restored.

Poem

It is the sundown air:
the shops have closed
their windows
The moon is tilting back
its rocking chair and
smoking marajuana.

Hobart Myers

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SCIENCE

Evolution and Revolution

in the History of Science — By ARTHUR KOESTLER

I FELT all the more honoured by the invitation to give this opening address as I am an outsider to the scientific establishment, and of the four letters which follow my name on the programme [FRSL] the last is one too many. On the other hand, the occasion seems to conform to the spirit of the times, where both cultures are busy putting up signposts with "TRESPASSERS WELCOME—POACHING PERMITTED—ADMIRE OUR VIEWS—TELL US WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM." I intend to do just that.

But I must start with some preliminary remarks on the psychology of creativity. By and large, one can distinguish between two extreme attitudes to this problem. One extreme is represented by that brand of Behaviourism which, for the last fifty years, from Thorndike through Watson and Hull to Professor Skinner of Harvard, had a dominant influence on American psychology. This attitude to creativity is fairly summed up in the following quotation from Skinner's book, *Science and Human Behaviour*:

> The result of solving a problem is the appearance of a solution in the form of a response.... The relation between the preliminary behaviour and the appearance of the solution is simply the relation between the manipulation of variables and the emission of a response.... The appearance of the response in the individual's behaviour is no more surprising than the appearance of any response in the behaviour of any organism.... The question of originality can be disposed of....

ARTHUR KOESTLER, *novelist and essayist, whose two most recent works*—The Sleepwalkers (*1959*) *and* The Act of Creation (*1964*)—*have dealt with problems of science and philosophy, was invited to address this year's Cambridge meeting of the British Association, the annual conference which assembles the nation's leading scientists, from astronomers to zoologists. This is the slightly revised text of Mr. Koestler's paper.*

The organisms referred to are presumably rats in Skinner Boxes and pigeons trained by selective reinforcement to perform figures of eight, from which the experimental data are largely derived.

At the opposite extreme you have Gestalt psychologists, Jungians, existentialist psychologists, Zen Buddhists and Mescalin worshippers, who ascribe creativity to some Maxwell daemon closeted in the subconscious where he does your homework for you, while you are engaged in *dolce far niente*.

The first view is perilously close to our old friend the monkey at the typewriter, the second to the automatic writing of the medium in a trance. The first relies on trial and error plus selective reinforcement, the second on spontaneous intuition. The two views are impossible to reconcile so long as we stick to the hoary fallacy of describing behaviour in terms of a linear sequence—the unreeling of a chain of elementary stimulus-response units. The fallacy seems to originate in the naïve assumption that, because all behaviour unfolds in linear sequences, the causation behind it must also be a linear sequence; whereas, of course, all purposive behaviour involves the setting in motion of a complex machinery of wheels within wheels; in other words, it is a multi-levelled hierarchic operation.

To appreciate the significance of this concept, it is necessary to remind ourselves of the truism that the living organism is not an aggregate of particles but a hierarchic organisation of stable sub-assemblies, atoms, molecules, organelles, cells, organs, and so on, and that each of these sub-systems functions as a relatively autonomous self-regulating unit. It is equally commonplace to talk about the hierarchic principle in the nervous system, which neurologists, from Hughlin Jackson onwards, have never ceased to emphasise and to which the designers of sophisticated computers are paying increasing attention. But psychologists have shown a curious reluctance to apply this principle to the

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analysis of thinking and behaviour—and that may be the reason why they have such scant information to offer about the daily preoccupations of artist or scientist.

LET ME ILLUSTRATE this point by an example which does not appear in any psychological textbook. Piano playing is a complex hierarchy of skills and sub-skills, where each sub-skill is governed by its own rules of the game. On the lowest echelon of the hierarchy is the aptitude to hit the right key; but even this is not quite as simple as it seems because, unlike in touch-typing, almost any finger can be used to hit any key; besides, a hard or soft touch makes all the difference. In other words, there are fixed rules but flexible strategies. Mastery of the keyboard is not acquired through bit-by-bit learning but through practising the twelve diatonic scales, each of which superimposes its structured pattern, or *matrix*, on the board. Each matrix is governed by a *code* of rules—for instance, if you play in C Major, all black keys are excluded. The code defines the permissible moves but leaves you a considerable freedom of choice among them—you can use the same C Major scale to play "Three Blind Mice" or "The Marseillaise." But *vice versa*, you can transpose "The Marseillaise" from C Major to G Minor. Here, as in most complex activities, two or more hierarchies interlock: in one case, the specific tune has been abstracted and codified, in the other, a specific scale; but either matrix again has the twin characteristics of an invariant code and a variable strategy. Even playing a piece learned by heart is not the unreeling of a fixed linear chain because the skilled player can transpose any tune into another key requiring a quite different sequence of motions. "The simple reflex," said Sir Charles Sherrington, "is a useful fiction." The interpretation of thought and behaviour as a chain of conditioned responses is not even a useful fiction but a caricature of reality—a hangover from the mechanistic concepts of the 19th century which physics has long abandoned.

One might ask what the recreational activities of the piano player and the goal-directed activities of the construction engineer have in common; the answer would be that however different their motivation, they are both engaged in playing a game with fixed rules and adaptable strategies. A game has a multitude of variations; the ensemble of these variations constitutes what I have just called a "matrix." More generally speaking, I shall use the term "matrix" to refer to any rule-governed behaviour, that is, to any ability, habit or skill governed by a fixed canon—the "code." Matrices are ordered into hierarchies; the members of a matrix are sub-structures or sub-skills governed by sub-codes on the next lower level. Cognitive matrices include what we variously call "frames of reference" or "universes of discourse"; what psychologists called "schemata," "sets" or "associative contexts." Some matrices are rigid and stereotyped, like the courting ritual of iguanas and Royal Families; others are more elastic—chess allows for more flexible strategies than checkers. But however flexible the matrix, there is always a code—you always play a game even if you are not aware of it.

I MUST APOLOGISE for these references to a theoretical framework which I have developed in my last book; but without a frame of reference for the ordinary routines of behaviour, any discussion of creativity must end in confusion. It seems to me that the only alternative to the atomistic concepts of reflex-arc and chained units of behaviour is to recognise that organic life in all its manifestations, from morphogenesis to symbolic thought, is governed by rules of the game which lend it coherence, order, and stability; and that these rules, whether innate or acquired, are represented in coded form on various levels of the hierarchy, from the genetic code to the structures in the nervous system responsible for symbolic thought.

WHEN WE LOOK at a problem, we automatically start a search in our mental repertory for some rule of the game which has enabled us to solve similar problems. Routine problems can be recognised at a glance as analogous in some essential respect to other problems encountered in the past, which provides the appropriate matrix to cope with them. But even routine problems require a strategic skill in the selection and application of the correct sub-routines—such as extrapolation, intrapolation, schematisation, transformation of data. Above all, the more difficult type of routine task requires the *combination* of several sub-routines or members of the matrix. Take the following two cues from a crossword puzzle: *"Discussed a creature caught in the very act—7 letters."* The act is "deed"; the creature caught in it is a "bat"—*de-bat-ed*—discussed. Next: *"Badly scare an Arab who was once a tough fighter—7."* The Arab who was once a tough fighter is a *Saracen*, anagram of "scare an." Now solving a crossword does not require creative genius, not even an original mind. But it does require a flexible mind because the matrix employed here has a great many members, that is, sub-skills: the whole word or part of it could be an anagram; it could be a synonym; or a metaphor; or a play on words; or a positional hint

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(the bat "caught" in the centre of the deed); and there are several more sub-routines, each with its own rule of the game.

Now let me go back to my starting point and try to decide which of the two opposite views applies to crossword puzzle-solving: "manipulation through trial and error" or "spontaneous insight." Trial and error there certainly is, but it is far from random because the range of the permissible tries is selectively limited by the code of each sub-matrix: synonym, metaphor, positional shift, reversal of letters, etc. Even the anagram—which comes nearest to the monkey-at-the-typewriter situation—is not solved by random permutations, but by grouping letters into syllables, familiar prefixes and suffixes, and shifting, transforming, combining these sub-assemblies. The monkey is working on a hierarchically programmed typewriter which will only print sensible sequences. And as on each successive level of the hierarchy the rules of the game become more complex, the tries will become more sophisticated, the errors more refined. A long time ago, Bertrand Russell wrote that even a Newton could only learn to find his way through a maze by random tries. But some years later, Krechevsky and Tolman, the eminent experimental psychologists, created quite a stir by proclaiming that even the rat, learning to run a new maze, proceeds by forming hypotheses. A hypothesis is an implicit try, and as we ascend to higher levels of the hierarchy the tries assume more and more implicit forms: tentative generalisations, empirical inductions, tentative combinations of ideas, lastly, guidance by hunches. The whole confusion in the psychology of problem-solving started with the fallacious identification of trial and error with randomness—with the behaviour of the angry cat in Thorndike's puzzle-box. But although to every research scientist the legitimacy of trial and error as an essential method of heuristics is glaringly obvious, the psychologist will only see it in its proper perspective if he stops thinking in terms of conditioned response chains, and starts thinking in terms of cognitive hierarchies.

This becomes at once more evident if we turn to the opposite view: that solutions appear by spontaneous insight, all in one piece, not by a process of elimination but of direct intuition, accompanied by that sudden emotional catharsis, the Eureka cry or *Aha* reaction. This was the central issue in the protracted controversy between the Gestalt school and the Behaviourists. To discuss first the emotional aspect: we all know those experiences of delicious euphoria following the solution of a quite trivial problem, when the bits suddenly fall into place, regardless whether the solution had been proceeded by fumbling trial and error or whether it came suddenly. For, in both cases, the essence of the matter is the emergence of order out of disorder, of signal out of noise, of harmony out of dissonance, of a meaningful whole out of meaningless bits, of cosmos out of chaos. This is the trigger which releases the cathartic reaction, whether occasioned by a mechanical puzzle falling into place or a new theorem being born.

But what, then, does "spontaneous insight" mean? I think it means what I have just tried to say: the emergence of a new synthesis, of a whole on a higher level of the hierarchy than that of the parts which combined and fused into it. And the emergence of the new whole always gives the impression of spontaneity and suddenness regardless of how much fumbling preceded it, because the last decisive step in the combinatorial activity acts like a trigger on a Jack-in-the-box. Thus the strategy of solving routine problems consists in activating the appropriate sub-routines, *i.e.*, sub-matrices, in the appropriate order; but above all *in combining them in various ways when none of them alone leads to the solution*. This sounds trivial, but just this "combinatorial activity" appears to be the key to creativeness.

So far I have only talked of routine problems; but where exactly do we draw the line between the solving of routine problems and creative originality? Let me quote two opinions —a historian's and a mathematician's. The historian, Thomas Kuhn, speaks of "mopping-up operations" which "are what engage most scientists throughout their careers..." and mentions as the "most striking feature" of normal research activities "how little they aim to produce major novelties, conceptual or phenomenal."[1] The mathematician, George Polya, defines a routine problem as one

> which can be solved either by substituting special data into a formerly solved general problem, or by following step by step, without any trace of originality, some well-worn, conspicuous example.[2]

He contrasts these routines with the "rules of discovery": "the first rule of discovery is to have brains and good luck. The second rule of discovery is to sit tight and wait till you get a bright idea." If one were to take this seriously, one would have to conclude that the cohorts

[1] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[2] George Polya, *How to Solve It* (Princeton University Press, 1945).

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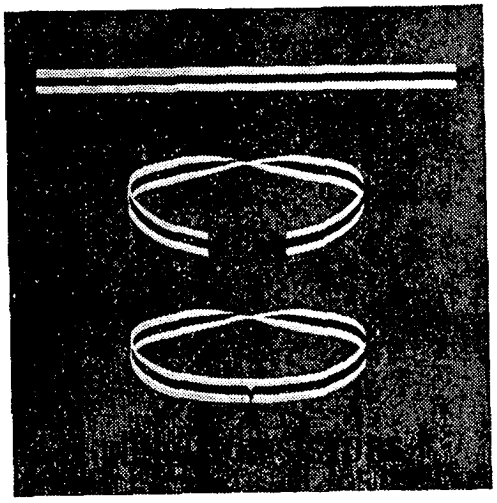
of science consist exclusively of Privates and Generals, geniuses and handymen. Let us rather look at a concrete example and try to decide whether to call it a routine affair or an original discovery.

A couple of years ago, I read in a science column the following report about an electronics physicist in Albuquerque, New Mexico, who worked on radar equipment. His problem was to reduce the troublesome side-effects (of capacitance and inductance) in resistors, when brief pulses of high frequency currents are sent through them. One day, the article said,

> he let his mind wander and remembered an old parlour trick, the Möbius loop. Mathematics suddenly merged with electronics and he had what he was searching for.

A few months after this story appeared, you could see the new non-reactive "Möbius resistor" advertised in the *Scientific American*. It is made by sticking two strips of aluminium tape to opposite sides of a non-conducting ribbon (made of plastic), then twisting it a half turn and joining the ends so that the conducting strips become a single loop, then soldering wire leads to opposite sides of the loop. (See drawing.) If you now send an electric pulse through



those leads, the current divides, flows in both directions through the foil and, since the Möbius loop has the perverse quality of possessing two sides, but only a single, continuous surface, the pulses apparently pass right through themselves. When the inventor was asked how exactly the thing worked, he replied: "Maybe Maxwell could tell us, but he is dead."

Now here you have a striking combinatorial achievement. Let us try to analyse the reasons why it is so striking. Three reasons come to mind. Firstly, because it is an original combination which creates a novelty. In the second place, it is an unexpected combination because the two matrices or associative contexts have previously each led a separate existence, as remote from each other as cabbages and kings. In the third place, because the idea occurred to the inventor "while he let his mind wander"; in other words, it came to him spontaneously without conscious effort. And since ideas must have an origin, we must conclude that it originated in some extra-conscious process.

HERE, THEN, we have three factors: (*a*) originality; (*b*) the previous unrelatedness of the matrices which enter into the combination; we may, somewhat loosely, call this factor the improbability of the combination; and (*c*) the intervention of extra-conscious processes.

I have suggested in *The Act of Creation* that these three factors—plus a fourth to be added presently—may serve as criteria of what we call creativity. Let me briefly discuss each of them.

(*a*) Originality does not necessarily create novelty. Originality is a psychological concept, novelty a historical fact. There must have been many geniuses who left no mark on the annals of science, while others were conspicuous in priority disputes. According to a recent survey, multiple discoveries are not exceptions but rather the rule in the history of science; thus Lord Kelvin's published papers contain at least thirty-two discoveries of his own which he subsequently found had also been made by others. The "others" include men of genius such as Cavendish and Helmholtz, but also some lesser lights.

(*b*) "Invention or discovery," wrote Jacques Hadamard, "be it in mathematics or anywhere else, takes place by combining ideas. The Latin verb *cogito*, to think, comes from *coagitare*, to shake together."[3] The creative act does not create something out of nothing like the God of the Old Testament; it combines, synthesises, coagitates, reshuffles already existing ideas, facts, frames of perception, cognitive structures. In other words, it is the fusion of previously unconnected matrices. I have proposed the term "bisociation" for this combinatorial act, to set it apart from the normal process of association within a single matrix. Bisociation is a barbaric word, but it helps to focus attention on the specific character of the act; and about its importance there seems to be, for once, more or less general agreement among scientists and psychologists. To mention only a few, Poincaré in an oft-quoted lecture explained discovery as the result of a happy interlocking of the

[3] Jacques Hadamard, *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field* (Princeton University Press, 1949).

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"hooked atoms" of thought. According to Sir Frederick Bartlett, "the most important feature of original experimental thinking is the discovery of overlap . . . where formerly only isolation and difference were recognised." Jerome Bruner considers all forms of creativity a result of "combinatorial activity." McKellar talks of the "fusion" of perceptions, Kubie of the "discovery of unexpected connections between things," and so on back to Goethe's "connect, always connect." So far, then, we are on safe ground and we may feel encouraged to take a closer look at the bisociative process as a key to certain puzzling phenomena in the history of science.

WE HAVE SEEN that even solving a crossword involves combinatorial activities, often of a tricky kind—when, for instance, you have to combine riddle-solving techniques and anagram techniques at the same time. Why, then, not call this too a bisociative act? Because these various sub-routines are all members of the well-established mental matrix of the experienced crossword-puzzler, whereas Möbius loops and radar resistors were separate matrices up to the moment when they suddenly became members of a higher matrix in the inventor's mind. If the crossword-puzzler acquired his noble art untutored, and discovered all by himself that it requires the combination of two, or more, different techniques, then he would be entitled to call this a minor bisociation and even to shout *Eureka*. There is a hierarchic sequence of combinatorial processes in the development of the individual and in the historical development of science, resulting in a hierarchy of cognitive structures. The discoveries of yesterday are the commonplaces of today, and we marvel at mankind's erstwhile blindness in treating the motions of the moon and the motions of the tides as unrelated phenomena before they became inseparably fused in our minds. To recapitulate: although originality is a relative affair, each bisociative act, whether small or momentous, is a discrete step sharply set off from associative routine. Mental evolution is discontinuous, with quantum jumps, as it were, from one level of the hierarchy to the next.

This discontinuity is further reflected in the truism that the whole, the new synthesis, is more than the sum of its parts, and that its relational properties are to a large extent unpredictable by extrapolation from the properties of the parts. When Newton combined Kepler's laws of planetary motion with Galileo's studies of the motion of projectiles, a whole new universe sprang into being. One of the most dramatic chapters in the history of science is the series of mergers between previously separate disciplines, starting with Hans Christian Oersted's observation that the "electric conflict," as he called it, caused by a voltaic current, deflected a magnetic needle, to Maxwell's momentous sentence "that light consists in the transverse undulations of the same medium, which is the cause of electric and magnetic phenomena."

However, each significant new synthesis exacts a price. The matrices which enter into it are not simply coupled together; they must be integrated, and in the process of integration become modified in various ways and to various degrees. By and large, only technical innovations and minor discoveries result from a simple additive process which leaves the components intact—neither the Möbius loop nor the principles of electric resistance were the worse off after their union. But when Einstein bisociated space and time, both took on a bewilderingly new look in the process; and so did energy and matter. The progress of science, like an ancient desert trail, is strewn with the bleached skeletons of discarded theories, doctrines, and axioms which seemed to possess eternal life. The dramatic mergers of the last century entailed the sacrifice of beliefs which had constituted the very backbone of their separate disciplines—phlogistons, calorifics, "vital fluids," the luminiferous ether, the electric and magnetic effluvia.

THUS EVERY REVOLUTION has a constructive and a destructive aspect. But the destructions wrought by the 19th century had a quasi-Victorian modesty compared to the 20th. Within the lifetime of our generation we have seen matter evaporate, causality shaken, parity dethroned, infinity put into its place (wherever that may be); above all, we were given a new version of the Second Commandment: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or model of anything that is in the Heavens above or that is in the atoms beneath."

Thus, on the positive side we have a series of confluences, as in a vast river system, of the different "effluvia" into the unitary concept of energy, of the ninety-odd chemical elements into the same building blocks; and finally, energy and mass, particle and wave are all swallowed up in the majestic river delta; while on the destructive side we have an equally impressive series of floods and devastating erosions. For it is in the nature of the bisociative process that the impact of the two matrices makes each of them appear in a new light, so that axioms which had been taken for granted and hidden assumptions built into their texture stand mercilessly revealed and must be eliminated. One such

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axiom, that everything that moves must have a mover, survived for two thousand years. Another, that we are entitled to extrapolate our conception of reality towards the infinitely large and the infinitely small, has collapsed only recently. And Einstein's "God does not play dice with the world," which dates back to the Old Testament, is still *sub judice*. The destructive effects of scientific revolutions also display a hierarchic order: the closer they get to the basic axioms of thought, the more agonising the reappraisal which they demand.

NOW SCIENCE is made by scientists, and thus the destructive aspect of scientific revolutions must reflect some element of destructiveness in the scientific mind; or, to put it more politely, a preparedness to go recklessly against accepted beliefs. This destructive-constructive mentality I would suggest as the fourth criterion of creativity. It is related to originality, but should not be confused with it—the invention of the zip-fastener was highly original but not destructive. It is also related to the third criterion which I have mentioned: the intervention of extra-conscious processes, commonly called hunches.

The safest assumption is that hunches, like babies, are brought by the stork. To quote a famous saying ascribed to Karl Friedrich Gauss: "I have got the solution, but I do not yet know how I am to arrive at it." One could fill a whole dictionary with similar quotations, from Kepler to Dirac, all of them testifying to hunches of unknown, extra-conscious origin. However, the concept of unconscious mentation loses both its mystical halo and its clinical odour if we avoid the Cartesian fallacy of equating mental activities with conscious thinking; and recognise instead that awareness of one's own activities is a matter of degree, of a continuous gradient, reaching from the unconsciousness of homeostatic regulations, through the absent-minded tying of one's shoe-laces, to fringe-conscious perceptions and up to the optimum condition of focal awareness. But that optimum condition is not always the most productive. "Full consciousness is a narrow thing," wrote Einstein; and he added that his creative thinking consisted of a kind of "combinatorial play," the elements of which were vague, visual and kinesthetic images. It seems that pin-pointing the task with the narrow beam of focal awareness is indispensable at certain times and stages of mental work, but in other situations it can become an impediment.

Such situations arise when the problem cannot be solved by any conventional rule of the game and requires some far-fetched, reckless combination of matrices which seems unacceptable to the sober, disciplined mind. The true scientist, like the true artist, is an uneasy mixture of the adventurer and the pedant. A Chinese proverb says that there is a time for fishing and a time for drying the nets; and there are times when the adventurer imprisoned in the pedant cries to be let out to go fishing. The disciplined routines of thought within the framework of a single conventional matrix are the vehicles of scientific progress at normal times; but at times of crisis, caused by the appearance of new data or a new type of question, matrices which have outlived their usefulness can become straitjackets. To un-learn is more difficult than to learn; and it seems that the agonising task of breaking-up rigid cognitive structures and reassembling them into a new synthesis cannot always be performed in the full daylight of the conscious rational mind. It is more often done by reverting to those more fluid, less committed forms of mentation which normally operate in the twilight outside the beam of focal awareness, on a less specialised level of the mental hierarchy. These interventions of extra-conscious processes in the creative act range from the trivial to the dramatic, from James Watt's kettle to Kekulé's dream; but there is a vast literature on the subject and there is no need to go into it.

IF YOU TAKE a kind of grandstand view of the history of any branch of science, you will find a rhythmic alternation between long periods of relatively peaceful evolution and shorter bursts of revolutionary change. Only in the peaceful periods which follow after a major breakthrough is the progress of science continuous and cumulative in the strict sense. It is a period of consolidating the newly conquered frontiers, of verifying, assimilating, elaborating and extending the new synthesis: a time for drying the nets. It may last a few years or several generations; but sooner or later the emergence of new empirical data, of new developments in some adjacent branch of knowledge, or a change in the philosophical climate, leads to a hardening of the matrix into a closed system, a defensive attitude, the rise of a new orthodoxy. This produces a crisis, a period of fertile anarchy in which rival theories proliferate—until the new synthesis is achieved and the cycle starts again; but this time perhaps aiming in a different direction, along different parameters, asking a different kind of question.

This brings us back to the axiom that science is made by scientists and not the other way round. The historic cycle which I have just described could be regarded as a magnified projection of the various stages in the process of

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individual discovery according to the classic schema by Helmholtz and Graham Wallas: conscious preparation; incubation; illumination; verification or consolidation. On the historic plane the last stage of one cycle shades into the first stage of the next. The period of "fertile anarchy" which characterises the crisis corresponds to the feverish combinatorial games in the period of incubation; lastly, illumination—the emergence of the new synthesis—is mostly brought about by a quick succession of individual discoveries, often including multiple discoveries.

ONE COULD ALSO CALL the revolutionary phases the romantic, and the peaceable phases the classical periods in the history of science. The former appeal to the reckless adventurer, the latter to the pedantic stickler in the Janus-faced scientist. This split personality seems to me both the glory and the predicament of the trade. Its glory, because at best it combines flights of imagination with meticulous respect for fact; having one's head in the clouds and one's feet solidly planted in the mud. Its predicament, because either face can also turn into an ugly grimace—that of the obsessive crank's, or of blinkered orthodoxy. This explains perhaps why so many histories of science are written either as a chronicle of heroic exploits in the style of *1066*, or as a chronicle of scandals. Recently the second style has come into fashion; and indeed there is hardly a period or branch in the history of science without its scandals, martyrs, and skeletons rattling in the cupboard. No less a man than Max Planck wrote from bitter experience:

> a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.[4]

But, exaggeration apart, we also know the other side of the picture—that without the necessary scepticism, conservatism, and emotional commitment to the prevailing theories and rules of the game, the whole scientific enterprise would go to pieces. Michael Polanyi has given us a profound analysis of this unavoidable subjectivity and emotionalism in the scientist's attitude.[5]

I HAVE SUGGESTED four criteria of creativity: originality, the improbability of the combination, its constructive-destructive aspect, and the intervention of extra-conscious factors. There is no need to dwell further on those other factors which provide the counterweight, the necessary ballast for the creative adventure. Nor, I trust, is it necessary to stress the obvious fact that virtually everything I have said about the mentality of the scientist also applies *mutatis mutandis* to his step-brother, the artist.

LET ME SWITCH for the last time from the individual scientist to science as a collective enterprise. The overall view of evolutionary and revolutionary cycles which I have suggested in two earlier works has certain affinities with the views which Thomas Kuhn has independently arrived at in his book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, where he calls the peaceful periods "normal science" and describes revolutions as "paradigm changes." This is an approach rather different from George Sarton's well-known theory which holds that the history of science is the only history which displays a cumulative progress of knowledge, and that accordingly the progress of science is the only yardstick by which we can measure the progress of mankind.

Perhaps so—provided that we realise that the line of progress is not a curve approaching its asymptote, but a zigzag line; and that the yardstick is a relativistic yardstick. This does not mean, of course, that science does not advance; only that it advances in an unpredictable, jerky, erratic way. I have compared the great conceptual syntheses of the last hundred years to a river delta. But each confluence is also followed by a fanning out of specialised branches, subdividing into capillaries of more and more esoteric character. To change the metaphor: increasing specialisation is like the branching out of arteries; the sequence of mergers is like the reverse confluence of veins. The cycle which results make the evolution of ideas appear as a tale of ever-repeated differentiations, specialisations, and reintegrations on a higher level of the hierarchy—a progression from primordial unity, through variety, to more complex patterns of unity in variety.

[4] Max Planck, *Scientific Autobiography and Other Papers* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1949).

[5] Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958).

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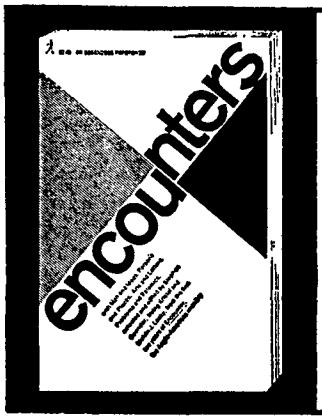

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THEATRE

For Love or Money

By John Gross

ONE OF THE MINOR scandals of theatre-going in London has long been the abysmal quality of programmes—a shilling for a cast-list, some credits to Kayser Bondor, and (if one is lucky) a couple of Angus McBean portraits of distinguished profiles gazing out into empty space. All the more credit, then, to the handful of managements which have tried to brighten things up over the past few seasons: the National Theatre, the Mermaid, and Stage Sixty. The National Theatre's programmes in particular deserve a bouquet; they are usually well illustrated, informative, and attractively laid out. But in this world every innovation has its price, and the penalty for improved programmes is programme-notes. Producers are encouraged to mumble credos which may be useful rallying-cries backstage, but which don't do them justice in print. Peter Wood's introductory note to his production of *Love for Love* is a case in point. In it he emphasises that Congreve appeared on the scene a full thirty years after the Restoration, at a time when merchant-princes were gaining in power at the expense of courtiers. So naturally the play reflects the author's "sharp disgust at the materialism of his audience." Recalling Mr. Wood's lugubrious version of *The Beggar's Opera* a year or two back, I feared the worse, another artistic crime committed in the name of social conscience. But happily the text itself, or the actors, or Mr. Wood's better judgment (or most likely all three) come to the rescue, and the evening is saved—becomes, in fact, a notable success.

Certainly Congreve differs from his immediate predecessors: the satire in his plays is more urbane, the language more supple, the lechery less frantic. But these are differences of degree, or temperament, rather than of kind. It still makes sense to bracket him with Etherege and Wycherley; despite his cooler tone, he shares most of their interests and assumptions. Nor is there any need to be slavishly literal in using "Restoration" as a label; even if it is stretched to include Congreve, the period which it covers is only about half as long as, say, the Victorian era, and like "Victorian" it is a term which can be seriously misleading in detail, but is much too useful to be abandoned as a broad designation.

If Congreve had been forward-looking, as one would of course wish all good dramatists to be, he might have given his undivided attention to the Rise of the Middle Classes. But somehow he stubbornly refuses to oblige. It is true that the plot of *Love for Love* turns mainly on avarice and mercenary scheming, but such things have been the staple material of social comedy since its earliest days. The gold-diggers and legacy-hunters in the play are the eternal types of the moralist, not the specific case-studies of the economic historian. Quite apart from which, half the best characters are driven along by humours which have nothing to do with making money. Tattle's innuendoes, Foresight's horoscopes, and Prue's animal spirits can hardly be classified under the heading of materialism. But it is possible to take the sheen off Restoration artifice by reminding the audience of the poverty and violence which were to be found in the next street, and Mr. Wood's production has its deliberately ragged edges, touches of Brechtian down-to-earthiness: the lawyer's boy with a writing-desk strapped to his back, the sailors' slatterns, the nurse smoking a clay pipe as though she were Li'l Abner's grandmother. Once again, however, Congreve is pressed into service reluctantly—which is not altogether surprising, since he must have been one of the least egalitarian authors who ever lived. (At his death, although many of his relatives and friends were in need, he left the great bulk of his fortune to the Duchess of Marlborough.) Oddly enough, Mr. Wood's various innovations, instead of acting as a cold douche of realism, have the effect of making Congreve look more colourful and picturesque than he normally appears. If anything, the production is some-

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times too robust: Colin Blakely's boisterous tar is fitted out like a pirate of Penzance, and the elephantine hornpipe which he and his shipmates are made to dance is definitely a mistake. But these are only minor flaws; the production as a whole is solid and sturdy without, I think, sacrificing the true spirit of Congreve.

For in recoiling from the suggestion that he had a serious social philosophy one can stagger back too far in the other direction, and talk as though his best dialogue were so much self-sustaining badinage, simply a virtuoso display of verbal shuttlecock. Admittedly to enjoy Congreve at all you have to be willing to take pleasure in fine-spun repartee for its own sake, without feeling guilt-ridden if it can't be made to carry a hefty load of moral significance. The view that his characters are completely divorced from reality has never been more persuasively put than by Charles Lamb:

> They break through no laws, or conscientious restraints. They know of none. They have got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and manners perfect freedom. It is altogether a speculative scene of things, with no reference whatever to the world that is.

This is a fine rebuttal of the moralising critics under whose interdict Congreve had lain since the days of Jeremy Collier, but for that very reason it overstates the case. There are exchanges in *Love for Love* which are more than merely decorative, where the comedy bites deep; Valentine refusing to bow down to his father merely because the old tyrant brought him into the world ("I know no more why I came than you do why you called me"), or the opening tirades of Scandal, that plain-dealer who never quite gets off the ground.

Most of the cast at the Old Vic are so good that the occasional sore thumb sticks out all the more awkwardly. Sir Sampson and Mrs. Foresight are weak, Jeremy the factotum might have had more polish. But John Stride's Valentine is a brisk, personable hero, who never allows the attendant grotesques to overshadow him, and manages the difficult scenes of feigned madness with admirable aplomb. Robert Lang and Joyce Redman are as accomplished as one would expect, Lynn Redgrave hurls herself at what would ordinarily be the fairly thankless part of Miss Prue with a zestful flying tackle, Colin Blakely's great natural gifts shine through as the nautical younger brother, despite his pantomime garb and the brogue with which he is unaccountably saddled. (One wonders, too, by what strange genetic fluke he comes to be his father's son.) Above all, there is Olivier's Tattle. Sir John and Sir Michael are also giving distinguished performances in London currently, but Sir Laurence—why is this knight different from all other knights? Chiefly on account of sheer mimetic vigour, the intensity of physical embodiment which he brings to a role. And as Tattle, with his gamecock strut and lips pursed in gleeful insinuation, he is in his element. The production is helped along by Lila de Nobili's splendid sets, Valentine's cluttered lumber-room of a lodging contrasting neatly with the mellow warmth of Foresight's country-house and its sylvan backdrop. On the other hand the costumes are drabber than they need be, and Geraldine McEwan's wig has rightly attracted a good deal of adverse criticism.

WHERE OLIVIER impersonates, Gielgud commands. His Ivanov (at the Phoenix) is a triumph of presence, of feelings frozen so cold that they burn. Immobile, taciturn, aloof, his performance must sound in print as though it is built up exclusively out of negative attitudes, to the point of dullness. But on the stage he imposes his authority so swiftly and firmly that the slightest facial contraction—a wrinkle of distaste, a frown of indecision, a pucker of self-reproach—is enough to convey the pain which is corroding him inwardly. Ivanov suffers from emotional numbness, paralysis of the will, what Keats called "the feel of not to feel it." Ought we also to see him as a typical disillusioned Russian liberal of his generation, the absurd victim of one of history's bad jokes? We are always being warned not to overlook the satire in Chekhov, not to use him as an excuse for autumnal self-pity; English audiences are regularly reproached for sentimentalising him, for failing to see that he is an artist of bold colours rather than pastel shades. Well, I can imagine a production of *Ivanov* which in the cant of lit. crit. "placed" the hero's pretensions more harshly than Gielgud's does, but I'm not sure that it would be an improvement. Chekhov himself undoubtedly knows that Ivanov is not necessarily to be taken at his own valuation, that he is deluding himself, for instance, when he laments his unfulfilled gifts. But a hundred other dramatists could do the same, and that isn't the important thing about the part. To see through a character is comparatively easy; what takes genius is at the same time to see him as he appears to himself. The most notable quality of *Ivanov* is surely the unwavering imaginative sympathy with which we are made to enter Ivanov's situation, even while his outward behaviour, especially towards his dying wife, is shown for what it is, callously self-regarding. He is often unforgivable; but we are invited to understand, not to condemn. And to understand

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Ivanov is to realise that he is a sick man, in the grip of a neurosis which is killing him. Russian literature abounds in such humane case-histories —they are perhaps its greatest glory—but one is also tempted to see here a more personal quality, the steady probing hand of Chekhov the doctor, Which makes it doubly ironical that in the play a young doctor should be Ivanov's bitterest critic, denouncing him with a fierce rectitude which Chekhov makes it plain—rather too plain—that he detests.

In his later plays, Chekhov distributes his sympathies more equally; *Ivanov* is early, and lop-sided. If the hero's ludicrous possibilities are held in check, as though Chekhov were still reluctant to admit that he might not have the makings of a traditional tragic hero, the villains are drawn more acidly than they are ever again to be. The group-portrait of the petty-minded local gentry is both repellent and very funny, and here Gielgud's production makes the most of its opportunities. The result is possibly a fraction too genial in places; Edward Atienza's half-senile old count cackles away divertingly, but ought to leave a nastier taste in the mouth than he does. On an evening when charity predominates, it is the wholly serious characters who come off best; the women in Ivanov's life especially. I have never seen Yvonne Mitchell give a better performance, while Claire Bloom is far more full-blooded than usual. Miss Mitchell hearing her death-sentence, Miss Bloom on her wedding-day, refusing to let Ivanov go: these are moments that wring the heart.

IN GERMANY the film of *The Knack* is apparently being distributed under the title *Warum ist Tolen so Sexy?* Ann Jellicoe's latest play raises much the same question with respect to Percy Bysshe Shelley, but fails to come up with any very interesting answers. *Shelley* (Royal Court) is a curiously old-fashioned charade, which treats the poet almost entirely at the level of "chatter about Harriet." At its more girlish moments, indeed, it threatens to turn into a Shelleyan equivalent of *Robert and Elizabeth*. Only the haziest sense of period, only a glimmer of Shelley's true stature. Nothing about his politics, his wit, no real grasp of his limitations. He was a highly complex character, and to render the full force of his genius on the stage would tax the strength of the most eloquent playwright. There are qualities which evaporate if one tries to translate them into prose. But a commonsensical account of Shelley, though unfair, could also be both revealing and amusing about the practical consequences of romantic self-intoxication. Peacock, in his brilliant semi-dramatic burlesques on Shelley and his circle, showed the way; Miss Jellicoe, alas, doesn't begin to follow. As a drill-hall documentary, her play would be innocuous enough, although even there it would be quite an achievement to rob characters such as Eldon and Trelawny of all dramatic fire. The actors at the Royal Court do what they can, and Ronald Pickup as Shelley at any rate has the right looks; but the whole affair remains an inexplicable aberration.

Anecdote

Carlos Trujillo
killed this mountain wolf
that killed his calf,

and strung it
high on a pinebranch
below Mt. Lobo:

when I asked him, "Why?—
For all the other
coyotes to see?"

his reply was:
"I did it
so the birds should have meat."

Kiowa Ranch.

Charles Tomlinson

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D. J. Enright

Come to Sunny S

You step down over the silvery sea,
Under the blue air, and there you find
The roads are rather Roman, and
Guinness is served ice-cold in the wine shops,
That the buildings are modern, or else
Middle-aged, no older than you are.

The British left GO-CAUTION-STOP
At intersections. Park opposite
A white line, you will surely be fined.
No mystery, simply a white line, a fine.
The laws are rather Roman too.

There are no nautch-girls here,
No geisha, no sing-song girls, indeed
We have nothing along those lines except
Women.

Our temples were erected yesterday,
And renovated this morning. We see no
Virtue in decay. Our schools face the old
Problem: children. Our scent is chiefly
Petrol. Our shops sell what we need.

Among our customs, self-sacrifice to
Tourists is not one. We sell you
What you can get at Harrods or Liberty's
But, being the East, a little cheaper.

We do not sell virgins cheap,
We need them. If you prick us, we shall
Probably bleed. For a price you can get
What you can get at home for a price.
We are not certain what we are, we are
Various: you will write books later and
Tell us. We shall display your books
In our tourist hotels.

Our speciality is race riots: which
Wouldn't interest you half as much as
The forbidden dances of temple prostitutes
(Tickets sold at all Government offices)
Or the Spring Festival (held every month)
Of a special class of female artist—
Neither of which we have in this country.

Our speciality is human trouble:
Which mightn't appeal to you, seeing
You could get your heads, breasts or
Balls sliced off accidentally. This
Is our only form of human sacrifice.

And I tell you this because I think
You may be human.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Sociologese

WHY DO SOCIOLOGISTS write such bad prose? The question is argued from time to time by either disdainful reviewers or defensive sociologists, but usually in a manner too innocently partisan to be convincing. To the disdainful reviewer, the sociological style is evidence of the pretentiousness of pseudo-scientific "insights" and "findings" which tell us no more than we all knew already. To the defensive sociologist, the same style is a necessary symptom of a technical precision of language and an avoidance of evaluative overtones without which the understanding of human behaviour cannot be (however inelegantly) advanced. But neither of these opposite viewpoints provides an adequate explanation either of sociological jargon itself or of the peculiar opprobrium which it appears to attract.

The question is worth pursuing a little further not merely because anything as ugly as some sociologists' prose is interesting in itself but because there is at the same time a moral to be drawn about the scope and status of sociology as an academic subject. Nothing is more tedious than quibbling over academic frontiers. But in this instance, it may be less trivial than usual. When a subject is outgrowing its strength as rapidly as sociology is doing in English universities at the moment, it is important to be clear what it is about; and the arguments about jargon may, quite apart from raising an issue in themselves, turn out to carry a further implication about the nature of sociology itself.

ONE FAVOURITE SOLUTION is to lay the blame on "the Americans." The critics of sociology can find much of their most convincing evidence in the American sociological journals; many of the best-known perpetrators of sociological jargon are the holders of university appointments in the United States; and it is only on the campuses of the American universities that the visitor grows accustomed to hearing a person described as, for example, "achievement-oriented" when "ambitious" would do perfectly well.

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But the accusation is not entirely just. It is true that academic fashions in the United States seem often to reflect a misplaced conviction that the procedures and techniques of the natural sciences can be grafted on to any and all fields of study; and this does explain some of the credence given to writers whose claims to "scientific" expertise about human behaviour are not always borne out by the actual extent of their contributions to knowledge. But the prestige accorded to natural science is a good deal older than American sociology; and the jargon of sociology is in any case international. More sociology is written in the United States than elsewhere, and therefore more bad sociology. But the style can be matched without difficulty in England and on the Continent. If nationality is the answer, it would be at least as plausible to lay all the blame on the Germans, who produced in Max Weber one of the most widely influential and least easily readable sociologists of them all. However glaring the stylistic failings of some, at least, of American authors, they cannot be blamed for the shortcomings of others than themselves.

Another tempting hypothesis is that sociology simply attracts less gifted people than do other disciplines. Its critics are apt to remark on the curious difficulty of pointing to works of sociology of outstanding intellectual merit. Leaving aside, they will say, the immediate practical value of a sample survey or a systematic field-study, what sociologists possess the intellectual gifts which even the uninitiated reader can detect in many contemporary works of history, economics, jurisprudence, philosophy, art and literary criticism, and classical studies? If there is any substance in this charge, may it not suggest a reason why the prose which sociologists write should so often be ungraceful, obscurantist, and pedestrian?

But this answer, too, is inadequate. It might be true, if it could be tested one way or the other, that the ablest university students are more often drawn to other fields. But even if it were, there are at least a few sociologists whose abilities are outstanding enough to demonstrate that their failings of style, such as they may be, are not failings of intellect. Max Weber, once again, is enough by himself to show how a formidable intellect can coexist with an almost impenetrable vocabulary. It may be that the least able researchers in any field of study will be those most prone to take refuge in the jargon coined by their fellows. But this is not sufficient to explain the jargon in the first place.

THE SOCIOLOGISTS THEMSELVES sometimes offer yet a third answer: the resistance of the layman to being told what he thought he knew better

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himself. Since we all think we know about human nature, we are disposed in advance to resist the findings of sociologists as being either mistaken or obvious; and in either case, we are likely to attack the language in which the findings are put as a defensive attempt to disguise what is either fraudulent or merely trite. But is it really true to say that we are all predisposed in this way? It could be argued just as plausibly that the lay public is too susceptible to jargon as not susceptible enough. Technical terms from both the sciences and the arts are constantly being assimilated into ordinary language, and not least from psychology, whose language would, on the argument put forward, be most fiercely resisted by those who thought they knew it all already. Whatever resistance we may have to accepting Freudian terms as an explanation of our own behaviour, and whatever may be the failings of Freudianism as a scientific theory, it would be difficult to claim that it has not passed into common speech. On the contrary, the jargon of a subject can be willingly and even greedily accepted almost irrespective of the merit of the theory behind it or of the resistance which some of its doctrines may arouse.

So the problem remains. But although the answers most commonly suggested by either sociologists or their critics can be shown to be insufficient, they prompt the one question which does carry the matter further forward. Sociologists, everybody agrees, write badly; but who *are* the writers who are labelled sociologists? Once this is asked, two things become apparent at once. First, an almost limitless diversity of topics is covered by writers called "sociologists." Second, and more significant for our purpose, a remarkable number of writers on the very same topics are not normally described as sociologists at all; and these others are much less frequently accused of jargon.

If sociology is the academic study of collective human behaviour, then virtually all of history and psychology is its province. Indeed, the way in which it is taught at the great American universities very often bears this out—the range of courses offered by American departments of Sociology, or Social Relations, or Social Institutions, or Sociology & Anthropology covers anything from experimental psychology to the philosophy of history to detailed studies of the structure of ancient China or modern Peru. But in that case, why are not all academic books on these topics "sociology" books? It cannot be a question of method any more than of subject matter, for there is no one method, statistical or otherwise, which marks sociology off from other subjects, nor is a professional objectivity in the analysis of human conduct the peculiar prerogative of sociologists. If Professor David Riesman's *Lonely Crowd* is a work of sociology, why isn't *Culture and Anarchy*? Or R. H. Tawney's *Equality*? Or Professor Dodds' *The Greeks and the Irrational*? Or Professor H. L. A. Hart's *The Concept of Law*, which even its author is prepared to describe in his Preface as "an essay in descriptive sociology"?

Even this brief list already suggests an answer: the best sociologists are likely to be labelled something else. Labels are, as I said at the beginning, unimportant in themselves. But in this instance they help to explain why it is that sociology is, and is bound to be, self-defeating as a distinctive subject. As soon as a new theory, or terminology, or technique in the study of human behaviour becomes established, it does not automatically pass into the province of "sociology." On the contrary, it is just as likely to pass out of it. It will probably pass either into a particular social science with a separate name or into the general body of the humane studies. In the first case it will be assigned to economics, or politics, or criminology, or demography or whatever it may be. In the second, it will become so unremarkable a part of our understanding of ourselves that it will cease to belong to an academic subject at all. In either case, what was at first rejected as pseudo-technical and therefore as jargon will no longer be so described. It is possible, of course—indeed it follows from what I am saying—that if a general theory of social behaviour ever came to be established, then its terminology would be no more regarded as jargon than the terminology of economics or demography (or chemistry or physics). But there isn't yet such a theory, and it is precisely against the attempts to find one that the charge of jargon is most often and most easily sustained.

UNTIL THERE IS such a general theory, of which economics, demography and the rest would merely be subordinate offshoots, sociology is bound to be not only an amorphous but a residual subject. Those writings which can be most easily assigned to it will be those which set out to generalise about social behaviour in new terms. Most of these new terms will not quite belong to either conventional social history on the one hand, or a specialised social science on the other; and they will be bound, therefore, to read like jargon. If the generalisation and the vocabulary in which it is couched are seen to be valid (or at least illuminating), they become an accepted part of whatever disciplines find them useful, from moral philosophy and literary criticism to the most sophisticated and rigorous of the particular social sciences. If they are not seen to be valid, they remain part of sociology—

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that is, of the aggregate of unsuccessful or provisional attempts to talk more precisely about collective behaviour.

This situation is rather unfair to the sociologist, but it is irremediable. So much of accepted sociology is likely to be called something else that the residue will always be what is most vulnerable to the charge of jargon. All subjects, after all, have their technical vocabulary. If "jargon" means merely long and ugly technical words, then it is hard to find a single academic subject which isn't full of it. This applies not only in the social or physical sciences. It is equally true of philosophy, although philosophers, at least of the Anglo-Saxon school, are generally held up as models of elegance and clarity. Why is "ontological status" any less jargon than "anticipatory socialisation"? Some critics of sociology would reply that it is because the language of human behaviour, unlike the language of philosophy, is better left to Gibbon and Tolstoy. But it would be truer to say that the language of sociology is that part of the language of behaviour which is trying to do something more than the language of the novelists and the historians but has not yet been recognised as having done so. In all fields, philosophy included, jargon is not jargon if it succeeds; like treason, jargon is by definition a failure. But the peculiar misfortune of the sociologist is that when his jargon is successful it is likely either to be assigned to some more specialised discipline or else to be taken over, like some of the language of Freudian psychology, by the novelists, the historians and everybody else.

All new terms begin as jargon, whether in the humanities or outside them. Somebody had to coin Renaissance and Liberalism and Unemployment and Taboo. But if they had not been found to have a useful meaning which could not be better expressed in other words, they would have sunk with as little trace as Bentham's "epistemothreptic" and "felicific calculus." They are all sociological terms, if that adjective itself has any meaning whatever. But it sounds odd to describe them as such when they become part of the orthodox and even commonplace vocabulary of our culture. At the present time there are two good words still struggling for such recognition which illustrate the dilemma very well—Weber's "charisma" and Durkheim's "anomie." If they fail, they will be two more instances of how sociologists try to clutter up the language with pretentious terms; if they succeed, then it will seem strange to describe them as part of sociology.

There is still a further unfairness if sociology is contrasted with the two academic subjects which ought, on my argument, to be equally vulnerable—anthropology and psychology. Both these subjects, it could be claimed, set out to be general social sciences, and both—particularly psychology—are as full of jargon as sociology itself. But there is more to it than this. Much of what I have said about sociology would apply to psychology equally well. But both psychology and anthropology are like the particular social sciences, and unlike sociology, in that they have built up a body of knowledge which cannot readily be described as anything else. There may be a lot of inflated terminology in psychology as there may in economics or political science or comparative law or the study of kinship systems. But underneath it there is a body of established findings and theories falling within definable limits. It is very much harder to sustain such a claim on behalf of sociology. Those authors of major stature who, like Weber and Durkheim, retain the title of sociologist, are generally those who have contributed to so many subjects that any other single term seems inadequate; it is not because they were in any but the very broadest sense doing the same thing. If you ask a sociologist to list the more important contributions which sociology has made, you will find that the majority can be claimed for some other field, whether political science or social administration or economic history or statistical method. The sociologist will be left with only the most general books or the most pretentious—those, in fact, against which the charge of jargon is most likely to be made.

Sociology, therefore, is so full of jargon not because its practitioners are less intelligent, or its audiences more resistant, than in other fields of study, but because it covers at once so much and so little that most of the best of it has come to be differently labelled. To say this is not to suggest that sociologists ought in any way to be discouraged from doing what they do. It may suggest that it is illogical for universities to set up departments of sociology alongside of departments of history, economics and political science; and it certainly helps to explain why the teaching which such departments offer should be so variable and so diverse. But any attempt to generalise more precisely about social behaviour is self-evidently worthwhile. The more sociological generalisations successfully pass into either our common language or particular academic disciplines the better.

The misfortune of sociology is that it will always appear to be more cluttered with jargon than the other disciplines for the peculiar reason that it is the only one whose most successful achievements are in constant danger of being classified as something else.

W. G. Runciman

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International Commentary

The German Dilemma

Letter from Bonn — By JOHN MANDER

TWENTY years after the war, sixteen years after the Christian Democrats formed the first West German administration, it seemed "time for a change." Intellectual opinion thought so; public opinion—according to the polls—seemed to think so too. The Social Democrats might not win an absolute majority, or even become the strongest of the *Bundestag*'s four parties; but it might well achieve 42–43 per cent of the popular vote, and enter into a *"grosse Koalition"* with the Christian Democrats. Significantly, one found this opinion shared by many right-wing observers. The SPD, one was told, might not make it this time; but by 1970 the Socialists would become a permanent majority party, somewhat like the U.S. Democratic Party. Sociologically, the coming dominance of the SPD looked to be inevitable. The drift to the towns from the countryside was accelerating; the conservative peasant vote (both Catholic and Protestant) was steadily melting away; the big-city vote, favourable to the SPD, steadily expanding. The young voters, it could be assumed, would turn increasingly towards Willy Brandt and the modern-minded SPD, and away from the stuffy bourgeois brand-image of Professor Ludwig Erhard's CDU. Right-wing observers in pre-election Bonn, in other words, saw little long term comfort for the CDU. The remarkable sexual imbalance in the German electorate—three million more women voters than men—was being fast eroded. Yet no factor had been more favourable to the CDU in the post-war years than this imbalance, in view of the reluctance (far greater, according to the polls, than in Great Britain) of German women to support a left-wing party. Again, many observers had begun to see the formerly so solid Catholic vote—the CDU's inheritance from the old *Centrum* Party—as a wasting asset. Not only had the hold of the churches on the German people declined sharply since the 'forties, but the new-style SPD, having made its peace with the Catholic Church, might now expect to win back those Catholic working-class votes its former anti-clericalism had alienated. What, then, could stop the SPD from dominating German politics in the 1970s?

The answer could not, surely, be Ludwig Erhard. Erhard might be a convenient symbol of the prosperity won by West Germany in the 'fifties and sustained in the mid-sixties: though voters are notoriously ungrateful, that ought to bring in the harvest. But as Chancellor, as a national leader? One did not have to be long in Bonn, on the eve of the election, to realise that Erhard had few serious supporters even in his own party. Political Bonn had long since made up its mind that Adenauer had been right: the man had not the stuff of politics in him. His confused handling of the Middle Eastern crisis, his apparent inability to stand up either to the Allies or to Bonn's numerous pressure groups, or indeed to achieve a modicum of unity within his own party, seemed to justify Adenauer's estimate of his successor. The man just would not do. If the CDU were ever to recover the impetus it possessed in the 'fifties, it must have a leader prepared not merely to exhort, but to take decisions. Otherwise, the civil war between the "Gaullists" (Adenauer, Strauss, Krone, Gerstenmaier) and the so-called *Atlantiker* (Schroeder, von Hassell, Erhard) would destroy the party altogether.

How, then, to get rid of Erhard? That, it was agreed, should not be over-difficult. The man had made it quite clear during the election campaign that he would not preside over a Grand Coalition. Adenauer, Strauss, and Gerstenmaier, on the other hand, had shown a distinct willingness to go along with the SPD: partly to spite the troublesome Free Democrats, partly to eliminate Erhard himself. Since the likely result of the election would be a dead-heat between SPD and CDU, a Grand Coalition seemed the natural solution. The new Chancellor would then be a man like Gerstenmaier or Barzel, both thought to be acceptable to the SPD. The way to a re-alignment of German foreign policy would

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be open. The name of the new Chancellor, in any case, would not be Ludwig Erhard.

IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, then, Ludwig Erhard did a brave and decisive thing. He set his face firmly against a Grand Coalition, and went out for a personal vote of confidence in his handling of affairs. The price of failure to stem the (apparently) rising tide of support for the SPD would have amounted to Erhard's removal from the scene. There was a good deal of surprise in political circles at this unexpected display of resolution. Bonn was not used to the man deciding anything at all: now he had made a decision that was, evidently, suicidal. Yet it was to prove the correct decision: Erhard's personal appeal recovered much of the ground lost to the CDU in 1961, and held the SPD below 40 per cent of the national vote. If further proof were needed that it was Erhard's appeal, and not a general swing to the right, that brought the CDU this success, it could be found in the relative failure of Strauss' Bavarian sister-party, the CSU. Under Strauss' leadership, the CSU had followed a militantly nationalistic line; echoing Adenauer, it had implied that Germany's interests were being neglected by her Allies and, worse, by the existing Bonn coalition. This did not pay off: the CSU increased its vote by a mere 0.6 per cent. It would be going too far, no doubt, to read into this result a protest on the part of the voter against Strauss' disloyalty to the tribal totem, Ludwig Erhard (also a Bavarian, but a Franconian Protestant, not an *Ur-bayer* like that Munich butcher's son, Franz Josef Strauss). But it gave no kind of encouragement to those in the CDU/CSU who called for a "Gaullist" realignment of German foreign policy. If the 1965 election was a triumph for Ludwig Erhard, it was no less a defeat for Strauss and Adenauer and their faction.

WHAT ARE the lessons of Erhard's success? First, and cynically: not to believe the experts, not even when armed with opinion polls. Next, more specifically: not to take Bonn's pretensions as West Germany's capital too seriously. It is customary to put down West Germany's provincialism to her lack of a political capital that is also, like Paris or London, a *Weltstadt*. The functions of a capital, in today's Germany, are distributed among a variety of regional centres. In the last few years West Berlin—rather surprisingly—has become Germany's literary capital: it is where Günter Grass, Uwe Johnson, and so many others have chosen to live. Hamburg has become the journalistic capital of West Germany: it is where *Der Spiegel, Der Stern, Die Zeit, Die Welt* have their headquarters. Other activities which we associate with a metropolis—radio and television centres, publishing houses, theatre, the law—are, in West Germany, scattered among half a dozen cities: Frankfurt, Munich, Cologne, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe. Regionalism has its advantages: German theatre has certainly profited from it. It has also, as Germans are the first to say, undeniable disadvantages: the German daily press would be a great deal more enterprising, and indeed readable, were it exposed to the competition of London or New York.

Politically, the weakness is plain, and never more so than in the 1965 elections. There is simply too wide a gulf between the professional politicians, civil servants, and political journalists of Bonn—and the generality of Germans. This works both ways. If the politicians of Bonn are liable to forget what makes the average German tick, the average German is also a great deal less sensitive to professional political opinion than is the case, for example, in Great Britain. Thus Erhard's weaknesses as a politician were admitted, in Bonn, by observers of all parties. But this view had plainly not penetrated to the man in the street in Hamburg or Munich, or in the thousand *Kleinstädte* where elections are actually fought and won. Erhard's victory may be, as one right-wing journalist put it, a triumph for the "a-political instincts of the German burgher." But the German burgher was always traditionally a-political, and he has not grown less so since Bonn became his *Hauptstadt*. It is only in the Bonn political hot-house that this truth could be lost sight of.

FOR THIS, SURELY, was the key to Erhard's success. The mood of the 'fifties was narrow, rigid, defensive: Adenauer, the strong man, was needed to hold off the Eastern hordes and to impose the authority of the new *Obrigkeit* at home. German "a-politicism" took the form of a retreat into authoritarianism, a willingness to delegate all decision-making to a man who knew his own mind. In the mid-'sixties, the self-confidence of the German burgher has recovered. It is no longer taboo to recommend—as all parties did during the election—contacts with Eastern Europe and even with Ulbricht's Germany. Communism is no longer a universal bogey. But the retreat from dogmatism has led, not to a popular demand for greater activism in foreign policy, but to a new complacency. Germany, it is felt, is holding her own pretty well: why change horses in midstream? The results of the 1961 election—the startling drop in the CDU vote, the unexpected success of the Free Democrats—were interpreted by many as reflecting profound popular dissatisfaction with Adenauer's foreign policy. That

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policy, it was argued, had led to the building of the Wall; the anti-Adenauer vote reflected the bankruptcy of Adenauer's policies in the 'fifties. The politics of the 'sixties would therefore be dominated by the consequences of Adenauer's "failures": his failure to resolve the German problem, his failure to secure a *modus vivendi* with Eastern Europe, his allegedly too great reliance on an America that (under Kennedy) might be more interested in a *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union than in re-uniting Germany. It was out of this critique of the policies of the 'fifties that the so-called "Gaullism" of Strauss, and of Adenauer himself, was born.

Looking back, this German "Gaullism" must seem a curious phenomenon, a queer mixture of the forward-looking and the reactionary. In its reactionary aspect it was an attempt, led mostly by right-wing Catholic politicians, to cling to the defensive cold war policies of the decade before. Though not all the "Gaullists" were Catholics—Dr. Gerstenmaier is a prominent exception—it is apparent that this defensive mentality does correspond to the historical role of German Catholicism, at least since Bismarck's *Kulturkampf*. But "Gaullism" was not simply reactionary. To be fair, it also reflected the profound concern of many thinking Germans at the immobilism of their official policies. This concern is to-day widely shared among young people, to whom the division of Germany is more live an issue than some observers predicted. It is also, as one would expect, a widely-shared concern of the Bonn political world—indeed the cautious moves towards a *rapprochement* with Hungary and Rumania, undertaken by the anti-Gaullist Schroeder, certainly reflect it. But that the "Gaullists"—and the equivalent foreign-policy activists on the left—were mistaken in thinking it was a concern of the German people as a whole is now apparent. The Bonn bureaucracy may crave a share in Western nuclear decision-making, whether in MLF or ANF; but the German people do not seem to be greatly interested. The 1961 result, contrary to what many of us thought at the time, showed not so much a desire for a more active foreign policy, as for a trouble-free foreign policy. The 1965 result showed, I think, that this is what most Germans are now persuaded they have got.

FOR THE OUTSIDER, then, two aspects of the 1965 election are of particular interest. The first, saddest, and most unexpected, is the apparent political eclipse of Willy Brandt. Whether this will prove permanent, I am not sure: at present the likelihood of a come-back does not look very great. Yet German observers were notably less surprised at this outcome than their foreign colleagues. The fact is, I think, that Willy Brandt's reputation has been to a dangerously large extent the creation of his foreign admirers and of the SPD's political manager, Herbert Wehner. Seen through German eyes, of course, Willy Brandt was not a traitor, a *Landesverräter* "who came back to Germany in Norwegian uniform" (though Brandt was certainly damaged by whispering campaigns of this kind); nor was he simply the youthful Siegfried of a beleaguered Berlin. The basic trouble was that he did not, for too many average Germans, carry conviction as a potential Chancellor. Why so many Germans should take this view is, to the foreigner, extremely perplexing. Brandt, to the foreign eye, was a winning and intelligent European statesman, at least as well-endowed with qualities of leadership and with experience of foreign policy as his rival Erhard. But that was not the way the man in the street saw it. I have no doubt, from my own observations, that the West German burgher, who was able to identify so cosily with the plump, cigar-smoking Professor from Protestant Nuremberg, felt no such instinctive identification with Willy Brandt. I have said that vicious whispering campaigns against Brandt did him great damage. But that is not the whole story. Erhard was unpardonably self-confident and eupeptic. Though Brandt picked up ground during the campaign (the SPD gained 3 per cent of the national vote), to millions of Germans he somehow did not appear what the Germans like to think of as *"solid"*; his years of exile, his Norwegian wife, his lack of German *pathos* and *gemüt*: Brandt was not felt to be "one of us." Even the factors which, in foreign eyes, were most obviously to his credit —his cool, cautious handling of the Berlin situation—may conceivably have harmed his image in West Germany. It is not that West Germans are disloyal to Berlin—but they would prefer to keep it and its problems at a distance. By forcing them, in the person of Willy Brandt, on the attention of the West German voter these last years, the leadership of the SPD may have made a serious, if honourable, miscalculation.

AND THIS MISCALCULATION is indicative of a deeper dilemma. The 1965 result implied, certainly, no vote of censure on the status quo. The several attempts—by the "Gaullist" faction—to inject a note of concern over Germany's international position into the campaign met with little response. Yet to argue from this that the West Germans have now accepted the status quo—in particular, the division of their country —would be altogether rash. There is plenty of evidence that the West Germans were worried about the confused handling of the problem of diplomatic relations with Israel; and a strong,

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and perhaps justified, subliminal fear exists that if no steps towards re-unification are taken before the end of this decade, the situation will indeed have come to be irremediable. This fear, though not expressed in the 1965 voting, is certainly not confined to the Bonn bureaucracy. At first sight, this may appear an oddly contradictory state of mind: the Germans wish for progress in the German question, and perhaps for a more active role within the Alliance —yet, at the same time, they fear it. They will the end as piously as ever; but they are apprehensive of the means. They know, after all, that any effective initiative in the German question must come from the Germans themselves. Yet any effective initiative on the part of the Germans is likely to revive that mistrust of German intentions, both among her Allies and her Eastern neighbours, that it has been Bonn's policy to put to sleep. And this is the last thing, for all their recovered self-confidence, that most Germans want. Minor relaxations on the East-West front—*die Politik der kleinen Schritte*—can probably be achieved. But the fundamental problems involved in German re-unification are of a different order. As with Bismarck's unification of Germany a century ago, no change in Germany's political status can be without effect on the balance of forces in Europe—and to say Europe is, in effect, to say the world. The West Germans have at the moment little desire to play Atlas—or even the European spoil-sport.

Nor is there any latter-day Bismarck in sight. What the Germans really seem to want, as I have said, is a trouble-free foreign policy—though they would like a little progress towards re-unification as well. And it is in this contradiction that the seeds of future trouble may lie. At present, such questions are acute neither for the Germans nor for their Allies. Yet it would plainly be a mistake for Germany's allies to act as if the complacent outcome of the 1965 election were the Germans' last word on the matter. One would not wish to be alarmist. But the danger-point may well be reached when the Germans become aware of the truly astonishing disparity between their economic and military strength and their relative insignificance on the international chess board. It has not happened yet; it will not necessarily have happened by 1969, when the next Federal Election is due. But for the coming generation of politicians—for Franz Josef Strauss, for the 46-year-old Helmut Schmidt, a possible SPD Chancellor-candidate for 1969, or for his most obvious rival, 40-year-old Rainer Barzel of the CDU—this disparity can hardly fail to be a major preoccupation. In their policies for the home-front, as far as one can see, these men are unlikely to differ violently. But the new men must certainly be aware that a trouble-free foreign policy is not reconcilable with progress in the German question. It will be interesting to watch, over the next few years, what conclusions they draw.

Beyond African Dictatorship?

IT IS A numbing experience finding myself in almost total disagreement with Professor Arthur Lewis' analysis and conclusions about the One-Party State [ENCOUNTER, August]. Nor is my disagreement over principles or objectives. Like Lewis, I am a social democrat; as such I find it impossible to approve or justify deviations from democratic practices. Like Lewis, too, I view with grave misgivings the current fashion to accept uncritically the various One-Party State experiments being tried out. Nevertheless, I feel his essay singularly unhelpful, even hurtful, to the cause of democracy in Africa.

Lewis has been led astray partly by his loathing—too strong a word?—of politicians. He characterises them as "rogues," "unscrupulous," "bosses," "power-hungry demagogues." Worst of all is his verdict that "politicians always seek personal advantage." This is plain nonsense. It is, moreover, mischievous nonsense—for to analyse political situations through eyes jaundiced by such dislike and distrust of politicians guarantees the wrong set of answers. Admittedly, Lewis does not see the One-Party State as being *wholly* the product of the wretched politicians. If he were less cynical about them he might have found it easier to analyse their roles within the total social and political situation, and thus perhaps avoided the rather glib suggestion that they are in a large measure to blame for the "retreat from democracy." The central error in Lewis' analysis is his failure to take sufficiently into account the total complexity of post-colonial societies which have made it difficult, perhaps even impossible, to establish democracies *during the transition period between independence and the consolidation of the nation-state*. How else can one explain the almost universal phenomenon of the post-independence rise of the One-Party-State? It is a mistake to examine this development as if it were any less characteristic of the Middle East or Asia than of Africa. Lewis' explanation for this setback to democracy is that it was due "to the heat of the moment," but mainly because "the ideas and institutions of democracy in-

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herited from Europe were inappropriate, and confused and weakened its supporters."

By recognising the "inappropriateness of the institutions of democracy inherited from Europe"—I exclude the "ideas"—Lewis shows awareness of what I believe lies at the heart of the problem facing emergent societies. Yet in his essay he fails to follow up this glimpse of the truth. A meaningful analysis should, I believe, proceed along the following lines.

First, one must recognise that although colonialism succeeded in establishing the political framework for the nation-state, it could not produce "the nation." Therefore the urgent immediate task of all post-independence governments is to try and "mobilise" the nation. But this process cannot be completed in twenty years, let alone in five or ten. Much too little attention is devoted to the study of what is involved in "nation-building." Its essential requirement is to create new institutions at every level —right up from local government to the national parliament, and including the civil service, the judiciary, the army and police, and the education system. These institutions must fulfil three functions in modernising, pluralist societies—the characteristics of all African States. They must be comprehensible to, and capable of being worked by, the people whose interests they are designed to protect and promote. They must also reflect the traditional methods and cultural ideas of the different components of the nascent nation. Finally, they must be capable of harmonising the competing ethnic and regional interests with each other as well as with the central government. (If one favours democratic institutions then, of course, one would want to ensure that they provide for two essential procedures: to ensure free election of popular representatives to the legislative-making bodies, and the unhampered right to control or change these representatives.)

This process involves simultaneously "nationalising" and modernising each separate institution. Because none of the institutions is suitable for its purposes in the forms inherited from colonialism, they are meaningless in terms of local cultures and invariably inadequate and inefficient. It is this factor which Lewis perceives; but the next stage of this inherited situation is the really crucial factor. On the one hand, the weakness of these governmental organs accentuates internal disharmonies while, on the other, they fail to provide the post-independence leaders with adequate machinery for dealing either with these new problems or with those inherited from the past.

Faced with this dilemma the insecurely-based post-independence governments can rely on only two forces: the limited power (army, police, administration, etc.) inherited from the colonial régime, and the natural authority deriving from the good-will accumulated during the independence struggle. Their authority, however, tends to be rapidly eroded by the sheer impossibility of making real their pre-independence promises in a climate of "rising economic expectations," and by the release of conflicting ethnic, regional, and other particularist interests (*e.g.*, trade unions, the middle class, etc). Thus at a time when there is an absence of institutions capable of harmonising the segmented society, the leaders of independence are faced with a loss of popular authority. In this situation they must either abdicate, compromise, or assert such power as they can mobilise. Usually they combine the latter two alternatives. It is at this point that repression tends to replace consultation and conciliation, and where the notion of the One-Party State begins to take root as a quick means of "including" the whole "nation" within the machinery of government.

It is easy enough to criticise this development; but if criticism is to be intelligent and helpful it is necessary at the same time to understand the complex difficulties of the total situation. It really has very little to do with "political rogues" or "power-hungry and unscrupulous politicians"—even though the degree of disharmony within the society might very well be intensified by the actions and behaviour of leaders with authoritarian or paranoidal personalities.

The One-Party State can be authoritarian or potentially democratic depending on whether or not the One Party allows for the effective inclusion of the whole population, as is the case in Guinea and even more so in Tanzania. In these countries Lewis' coalition idea is achieved by different methods from those he proposes. There are in fact very few Single Parties which are narrowly exclusive.

There are also no dictators anywhere in modern Africa in the sense we use these terms in Europe. None of the present-day leaders—neither Nkrumah nor Houphouet-Boigny—is capable of governing on strictly personal rule.

Lewis' belief in the democratic function of the middle-class is mystifying. If they were able to play the role he ascribes to them we would have no One-Party States in West Africa because each of these states is governed by its middle-class. This is as true of the Ivory Coast as it is of Nigeria, of Senegal or Mauritania or Ghana. The only difference between Ghana and Guinea and the rest is that they substituted a new middle-class for the older established one. But neither the new nor the older middle classes

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ANDRE DEUTSCH

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have behaved significantly differently once they form the ruling *élite*.

FINALLY, I BELIEVE that the One-Party State is probably an inevitable transition during the period between independence and the consolidation of the "nation-state." This transitional notion is crucial to one's assessment of what is likely to happen in emergent societies. Undoubtedly some will grow into full democratic societies in time, while others will remain arrested in various stages of authoritarian rule. Whether or not the great majority will end up as democracies will depend, I believe, on the rate of economic development which is vital to the successful modernising and harmonising of African societies in the dangerously difficult transition stage. Very few of these societies can, in fact, prosper on their own even if they were to adopt Lewis' economic prescription. They will need to be helped by more effective trade and aid—in that order—policies by the developed, and especially by the Western, nations.

Colin Legum

COLIN LEGUM and I agree completely that the "roguery" of politicians is neither a sufficient nor a necessary explanation of the single-party state. I thought I had made this absolutely clear.

We disagree completely about human nature and about social organisation. I take it for granted that most men are motivated both by a desire to be of service to their fellows and also by the need to fulfil their own personal ambitions. Politicians do not differ from other men in these respects; they are neither better nor worse.

Social organisation tries to harness personal ambition to public service by making it difficult to achieve social esteem (money, prestige) except by serving the public need. In the economic sphere the market and legal and administrative controls are designed to make it profitable to do only those things which society values. An economic system which relied mainly on the public service instincts of business men would certainly stagnate. Similarly, a political system which relied mainly on the public service instincts of politicians would have absurd results. The test of a political system is not, as Mr. Legum implies, whether the self-declared aims of the politicians are noble enough to justify their means. It is rather whether the system contains a set of controls adequate to enable society to rid itself of unworthy operators.

A political philosophy which claims that the party is above society is like an economic philosophy which claims that the business cartel is the highest form of economic organisation. Neither of these claims merits the attention of serious people.

W. Arthur Lewis

Letter from Warsaw

Mrozek's Family

Let no one leave here, until we find an Idea. Edek, don't let anybody out.

TANGO

"REVOLUTION and expansion—this is our slogan. Destroy old forms, down with convention, long live dynamics. Live in creating, move and strive beyond all limits, beyond form, beyond form." This is from Stomil, one of the characters in Mrozek's *Tango*, a terrifying modern grandfather. But in the chronology game we are to play, real biographies do not matter; important are only the identification marks of generations. The action of Jarry's *Ubu Roi* takes place in Poland, that is to say, nowhere. The action of *Tango* takes place in Poland, that is to say, everywhere. Stomil represents not only the Polish older generation of "modern" ladies and gentlemen: "Do we submit to superstitions, or conventions which hamper humanity? Do we not wage a continuous fight against the old era? Are we not free? ... All these bonds, these crusted fetters of religion, morality, society, art? Above all art, Stomil, above all art." He represents also the whole generation of European formists, dadaists, surrealists: Tzara (1896), Breton (1896), Eluard (1895), Cocteau (1892), Artaud (1895).

I myself attended their short course in Surrealism in 1938. I remember games of "the exquisite corpse" at André Breton's and competitions for "de-sensed objects." A year ago they were shown at a Surrealist exhibition as museum pieces: a Surrealist iron with a nail driven in its bottom plate; a carefully bandaged violin tied up with a huge safety pin; a plate

JAN KOTT'S *study, "Hamlet of the Mid-century," appeared in the August 1964* ENCOUNTER *(together with a personal note about him by Peter Brook). His* Shakespeare Our Contemporary *was published by Methuen (and by Doubleday in New York) earlier this year. He has recently been in Edinburgh, directing* Out at Sea *and* Police *by Slawomir Mrozek, whose* Six Plays *will be published by Jonathan Cape, and Grove Press, New York, next year.*

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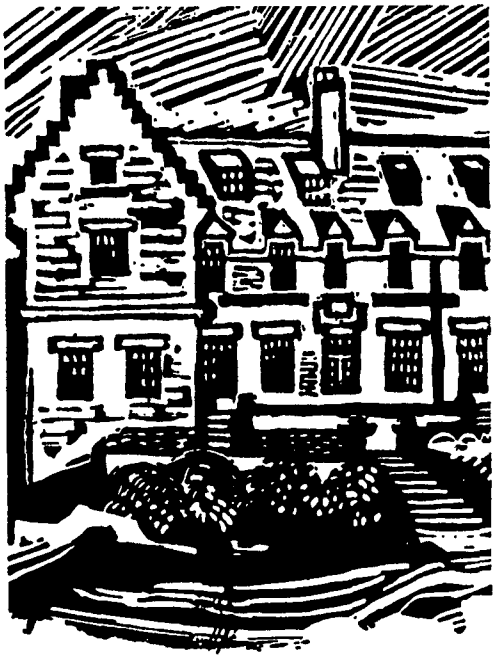

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with an immobilised fork protruding from it. Once these objects were frightening; now they seem good and simple, even touching. They are as childish as were the provocation actions in the sphere of morals in those days. Moral references in Mrozek are almost impeccable in their exactitude: "You possessed me in front of mummy and daddy on the first night of *Tannhaüser*, in the first row of the stalls, as a sign of protest. What a scandal that was. Ah, the times when it still made an impression...."

In *Tango*, as always in Mrozek, the terms of reference are not just Polish, but European. He is concerned with the way of life, the "style" of a generation, that of *"la belle époque."* All life's joys were treasured, but any emancipation there was, was for a very private use only. Conventions were there to be respected and evaded. That is why Uncle Eugene will easily come to stand on Arthur's side. Arthur says: "This house is beset by inertia, entropy, and anarchy." We can recognise Arthur's year of birth by "entropy," a word used in place of "the fourth dimension" and "theory of relativity." Arthur is no more than twenty-five years old; he was born in 1940. He has no political memories; October is to him only a month with very bad weather. Ala is only seven years younger than Arthur, but differences of generation, seen from a close distance, are strongly marked for young people with only a few years' gap between them; only later it becomes clear that they belong to the same generation. In Mrozek's family, Arthur is the last of the ideologists. He looks for resistance, because he wants to repair the world. Ala really does not understand what it means to "set it right." To her everything comes and seems natural: herself, her bed, the political system. She has no conflicts and has the aseptic attitude to love said to be the characteristic of Scandinavian girls. Mrozek has an excellent ear. All the differences between the mentalities of these half-generations are contained in the following dialogue:

ALA: Stomil pinched me twice to-day.
ARTHUR: The scoundrel.
ALA: He is your father.
ARTHUR: I am glad you have drawn my attention to the fact.
ALA: Well, you use such old-fashioned expressions about your father. No one talks like that about his father these days.
ARTHUR: How do they talk then?
ALA: One does not pay any attention to one's father at all.

Here one could end the chronology game. It had seemed that family comedy meant just that: wife, husband, lover, children in conflict with their parents, or a bride from a wrong social class; it had seemed that this convention could produce nothing new whatsoever, that it was not good for anything except drawing-room comedy. Whenever farce or tragi-grotesque of the absurd tried to drop the family, it found itself beyond time; at any rate beyond real time. In family-comedy there were grandparents, parents, and children; time was not abstract, it consisted of concrete biographies. Another Polish playwright, Mrozek's direct predecessor, Witkiewicz, was one of the first to put the absurd family-comedy again in the context of historic time, historic costumes, historic gestures. With one difference, though: with the end of the world in mind. His was a grand family buffo with an eschatological ending. Mrozek's eschatology is different. The grandmother in *Tango*, lying on her catafalque, has been taken from the poetics of the absurd; the corpses have been taken from Witkiewicz and from Ionesco; but the variations of time are real. Mrozek is a realist, saying his obsequies over Polish absurdities.

"IT'S JUST no use trying; the thing is hopeless. You are monstrously tolerant." (*Tango.*)

Two weeks after the publication of Mrozek's *Tango* in the Warsaw monthly *Dialog*, I met the wife of my friend, a prominent astrophysicist. "Isn't Mrozek wonderful," we greeted each other. And then, as usual, we began to discuss our daughters. "How is yours?", asked my friend's wife. "Impossible. And yours?" "Impossible," said my friend's wife, and added: "But it's really our homes that are impossible. They are not homes fit for children." "Mrozek," said I. "Mrozek," said the wife of my friend.

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I am a Marxist." We reply: "Very well, my dear child, very well. Your father was a Marxist, your mother was a Marxist. It is nice you are following your parents' footsteps."

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I think I have become a Luxemburgist." We reply: "A Luxemburgist? Couldn't you have thought of something else? But, all things considered, it's an interesting Marxist deviation. Very well, be a Luxemburgist, if you want to."

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I've become an Anarchist." We reply: "An Anarchist? Very interesting. No one has been an Anarchist for a long time. This gives credit to your intellectual independence."

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I am a practising Catholic." We reply: "Your father doesn't believe, your mother doesn't believe, but the freedom of conscience is most important of all. This is your affair. All things considered, Catholicism is a very beautiful religion."

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The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I've got a lover." We reply: "A lover? At your age? You're only sixteen. But some doctors say that one has to begin early. The most important thing, my child, is not to tell a lie."

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I am pure and will remain pure." We reply: "Some doctors say it is very healthy. The most important thing is to be at peace with oneself."

The daughter comes and says: "Mother, I have two lovers." We reply: "Two lovers? At your age? This is naughty. But, perhaps it's the accepted thing nowadays. Some doctors are in favour of a change. It is most important for you to have absolute trust in your parents. They never forbid you anything."

THE THEATRE of the absurd has had its representatives in Poland for quite some time. There was Witkiewicz between the wars, there is Witold Gombrowicz, who embarked on his literary career before the war. Witkiewicz came too early, Gombrowicz exists apart (in Paris, in Buenos Aires). Mrozek has been the first to come at the right time. Not too early and not too late, according to both the Polish and European clocks. The drawing-room, the revolver, the villain and the corpses in *Tango*, all this has been inherited from Witkiewicz; language and basic philosophical juxtapositions have been taken from Gombrowicz. Ala takes a bit after Miss Youthful in Gombrowicz's novel *Ferdydurke*;[1] Stomil is unbuttoned, also after the fashion of Gombrowicz. The conviction that the artist is the litmus of his time is a Witkiewicz concept. "The artists are plague. They were the first to corrode our time," Stomil says, a belief that has been shared by many outstanding statesmen (Eisenhower, Truman). The struggle of form with nullity, of convention with sloppiness, is Gombrowiczian, so is the "absolute impossibility" into which Arthur falls; just as Uncle Eugene has been "fitted with a bum" in the Gombrowicz manner and almost sent back to school in his shorts.

Arthur says: "Nothing is serious, or means anything at all in itself. Everything is null. We shall drown in this nullity, unless we give things a character. We must create some meanings, if there are none in nature." This is Gombrowicz almost literally. The Gombrowiczian system of discoveries began with a grotesque image of inadequate pre-war Poland; later all his "mugs," "bums," "juniorities" and "nullities" became only language, a universal but abstract language. All those mugs and bums found themselves in a void. Mrozek restored their reality, and even more—their new historical literality.

Arthur opposed the unbuttoned old gentlemen with their childish-old non-conformism, using Gombrowiczian form as his weapon. Form means style. Style means grandparents' furniture. Grandparents' furniture is being bought and sold by antique dealers. Lately they have been after green gas-lanterns and turn-of-the-century oil-lamps. Arthur puts a top hat on his uncle's head, asks his father to get into a corset, his grandmother to put on an evening dress of half-a-century ago, and his bride to appear in a white veil. The bride and groom kneel, Mendelssohn's wedding march is played on the gramophone, grandmother gives them her blessing, and the ceremony ends with a family photograph. But there will be no photograph: the old box-camera is not working. Moths flying about in a smell of moth balls. The old form has turned out to be dead. The reification of objects has not happened. Sociologists know full well that forms and objects which have once been sent to antique shops may grow in value, but we do not let ourselves be ruled by them any more.

Stomil says: "What are we to do.... When tragedy already is impossible, and farce bores us, there remains only experiment." Mrozek's buffo tone is unambiguous. His serious tone is far more difficult to interpret. I personally think that Mrozek sees his world also in terms of a cataclysm, but his catastrophic tendency is, as always in Mrozek, ambiguous and ironical. Arthur is also a Hamlet who has to repair a world, and he tells his grandmother: "Even you, grandma, have grown old in a world that is out of joint." And grandmother says to Arthur: "Why don't you enter a monastery?" Arthur, like Hamlet, is the last of the ideologists, and, like Hamlet, will die murdered, in the theatre of cruelty, half-Shakespeare, half-Artaud. Edek's last words have an echo of Fortinbras: "You have seen what a blow I can strike. But do not be afraid. As long as you sit quietly, don't move about, and pay attention to what I say, you will be all right with me, you'll see. I am a simple man. I like to crack a joke occasionally, I like fun. But I must be obeyed."

Mrozek and the poet Zbigniew Herbert belong to the same generation, and Herbert expressed the same essential in his *Elegy of Fortinbras*:

I must also devise a better prison system
since as you rightly observed Denmark is a prison.
Let me go about my business.

Jan Kott

[1] W. Gombrowicz, *Ferdydurke* (Warsaw, 1937; MacGibbon & Kee, 1961).

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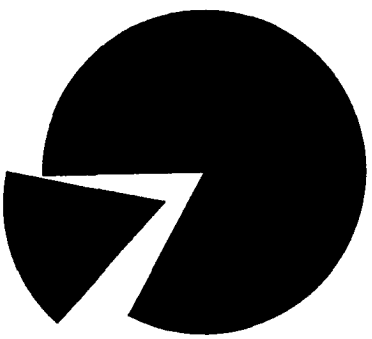

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Fiery Particle

On Muriel Spark — By RICHARD MAYNE

HOW OFTEN is our reaction to a writer's work affected by the chance associations of his name? Shakespeare, Shelley, and Keats are obvious exceptions; but doesn't "Jane Austen" suggest poised rectitude, "Charles Dickens" a forthright, rickety-rackety *raconteur*? Hasn't "Evelyn Waugh" a touch of the patrician, "C. P. Snow" a certain measured solemnity, "Norman Mailer" the gymnasium virility of an American athlete? One can play the game indefinitely, teasing out the sunbaked, tippling connotations of "Rudyard Kipling," the ostentatious, slightly florid languor of "Oscar Wilde," the wry, neat reticence of "D. J. Enright." The candidates are many: and most appropriate of all, it seems to me, is Muriel Spark.

Even the dictionary, here, is suggestive: "fiery particle thrown off from burning substance, or still visibly alight in ashes, or struck off by impact from flint"; "small bright object or point *e.g.* in gem"; "brilliant emanation of wit &c."; "luminous effect of sudden disruptive discharge." No less apt is the aura of words that "spark" itself resembles—"sharp," "spike," "spook," "speed," "skill," or by extension "pert" and "pat." There's no call to stretch the conceit any further; but it serves as a set of cross-references to some of the essentials in Mrs. Spark's already extensive *oeuvre*.

Wit is the quality most often singled out by her reviewers, critics, and admirers. Everyone has his favourites: my own vote goes to those brief Firbankian flashes that illumine all of her novels, including the latest and most ambitious.[1]

> "You have to take what's put before you here. Sometimes we have as many as a hundred and thirty pilgrims. Suppose a hundred and thirty people all wanted tea without milk—"
>
> ..."But I only say don't *trouble* to put milk in mine."
>
> "It isn't what you say, it's what you get."
>
> (*The Comforters*, 1957)

> "I did see this chappie at the airport," said Jimmie, "and in the moment I behold him I perceive he is not a superior type of bugger. I say to myself, Lo! this one is not a gentleman."
>
> (*Robinson*, 1958)

> The matron came in at three o'clock and read out the telegram from the Queen. Everyone applauded. Granny Valvona commented, "'... on your hundredth birthday,' doesn't sound quite right. Queen Mary always used to say, 'on the occasion of your centenary'."
>
> (*Memento Mori*, 1959)

[From a list of "suitable phrases" compiled by the ghostwriter of an actress's autobiography:]

> "I thrilled to his touch.
> I was too young at the time to understand why my mother was crying.
> As he entered the room a shudder went through my frame....
> She was to play a vital role in my life.
> Memory has not played me false.
> He was always an incurable romantic.
> I became the proud owner of a bicycle...."
>
> (*The Ballad of Peckham Rye*, 1960)

> Marlene waited outside the lavatory. A man emerged with eyebrows which were by nature fixed in slight astonishment, and which, when he saw Marlene, seemed to try to rise. "Is my nephew in there?" Marlene said.
>
> The man moved off, assuming her to be one of the maids gone mad in her private life.
>
> (*The Bachelors*, 1960)

> The girls on the Modern side were doing German and Spanish, which, when rehearsed between periods, made the astonishing noises of foreign stations got in passing on the wireless. A mademoiselle with black frizzy hair, who wore a striped shirt with real cuff-links, was pronouncing French in a foreign way which never really caught on. (*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, 1961)

> Dorothy could emit, at any hour of the day or night, a waterfall of débutante chatter, which rightly gave the impression that on any occasion between talking, eating and sleeping, she did not think, except in terms of these phrase-ripples of hers: "Filthy lunch." "The most gorgeous wedding." "He actually raped her, she was amazed." "Ghastly film." "I'm desperately well, thanks, how are you?"
>
> Her voice from the wash-room distracted Jane:

[1] *The Mandelbaum Gate*. By MURIEL SPARK. Macmillan, 25s.

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"Oh hell, I'm black with soot, I'm absolutely filthington." She opened Jane's door without knocking and put in her head. "Got any soapyjo?" It was some months before she was to put her head round Jane's door and announce, "Filthy luck. I'm preggers. Come to the wedding."

(*The Girls of Slender Means*, 1963)

Barbara and Harry were married and got along fairly well together ever after.

(*The Mandelbaum Gate*, 1965)

On the subject of humour, Mrs. Spark herself lets fall, in her new novel, a remark which is strange and revealing. Young people are whooping it up in the cellar of a laundry at Acre: an Arab girl is doing "a mimic version of an obscene dance performance that was current in the nightclubs of Amman." "The dancer wore only a filmy scarf wound round her body in a comic fashion that seemed to all, in the excitement and heat of the night, far more funny than it was." The expertise about Amman is already something of a conversation-stopper: but the last few words leave one breathless. "Far more funny than it was," mark you, not "than it might otherwise have seemed." If "all" were amused, who's the sourpuss with the jokemeter? As any music-hall manager will tell you, you can't judge an act by its script.

The point, though small, is worth making, since it seems to me characteristic of much of Mrs. Spark's work. Always, behind the tale, there lurks an alert didactic narrator: sometimes, she intervenes. I say "she" advisedly, because when the fabric of the story stirs, it's usually to the scratch of female claws. Remember the opening of *The Bachelors*, those lone pernickety males emerging from bed-sitters on Saturday morning with their plastic shopping-bags: "...these bachelors would set out early, before a quarter past ten, in order to avoid being jostled by the women, the legitimate shoppers." Irony, perhaps: but in its ambiguity one seems to sense the narrator's tart tone. It breaks through elsewhere in the same book: "Patrick Seton sat in his room ... and thought. Or rather, he sat and felt his thoughts."

Who is this self-assured narrator? It would clearly be vulgar to identify her completely with the author: besides, her characteristics are shared, quite often, by female characters in the books. There's Sybil, in "Bang-bang You're Dead" from *Voices at Play* (1961): "Sybil was precocious, her brain was like a blade." Her husband, a one-time archaeologist, neglects the learned journals that arrive in the mail: "If it were my subject, she thought, these papers would be necessary to me. Even the crackpot ones, rightly read, would be, to me, enlarging." In other books, such reflections might invite the reader's mockery: here, I'm not at all sure that we're meant to keep our distance. My own uneasiness on this point isn't quelled by the fact that a similar character plays a central part in *The Mandelbaum Gate*: "... she was gifted with an honest, analytical intelligence...." Surely, there's too much assertion here.

Assertiveness, however, isn't the only mark of the narrator's presence. Her other main quality, and one that emerges most bizarrely in the note about humour, is a mother-knows-best dead-certainty that holds Mrs. Spark's novels in what her actress' ghostwriter would call a vice-like grip. This isn't merely a matter of literary artifice—although Charmian, one of the relatively sympathetic characters in *Memento Mori*, points out that "the art of fiction is very like the practice of deception," and *The Mandelbaum Gate*, in particular, employs guile (and a case of amnesia) to great effect. Much more, I think, it's a matter of moral absolutism which can't be finally separated from the fact that Muriel Spark is a Roman Catholic novelist.

Once again, the choice of words is deliberate. There are Catholics, even in England, who write novels betraying no obtrusive allegiance; but it's no criticism of Mrs. Spark herself to say that she's not one of them. Her publishers rather rub it in, on some of her dust-jackets, by quoting praise from quite a gang of her co-religionists—no very effective puff for outsiders, who are always prone to suspect the rolling of logs. Nor can one blame a Catholic, and especially a convert, for writing about so central a concern: as another sympathetic character remarks in *The Bachelors*, "Don't ask me how I feel about things as a Catholic. To me, being Catholic is part of my human existence. I don't feel one way as a human being and another *as a Catholic*." So, in almost all Muriel Spark's books, we're confronted with Catholic characters and Catholic problems: The Pilgrim Centre of St. Philumena in *The Comforters*; the Catholic narrator of *Robinson*; the Catholic grannies in *Memento Mori*; a nun in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*; a martyr in *The Girls of Slender Means*; and in *The Mandelbaum Gate* the woman already quoted, who in addition to her intelligence has "the beautiful and dangerous gift of faith."

To a non-Catholic, all this inevitably seems cosy—particularly since it's accompanied by occasional digs at the opposition. In *The Bachelors*, for example:

"I'm anti-Catholic," said Marlene.

Ronald was used to hearing his hostesses over the years come out with this statement, and had devised various ways of coping with it, according to his mood and to his idea of the hostess's intentions. If the intelligence seemed to be high and Ronald was in a suitable mood, he replied, "I'm

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anti-Protestant"—which he was not; but it sometimes served to shock them into a sense of their indiscretion. . . .

In *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*—who herself is mildly patronised for her disapproval of the Church of Rome—we hear an Elder of the (non-Catholic) church "singing rather slowly and mournfully":

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
Come ye before him and rejoice.

And *The Mandelbaum Gate* is full of similar allusions. Freddy, a middle-aged minor diplomat who's in part portrayed as a well-meaning nonentity, is used to express—and thus belittle—Protestant impatience at Catholic rules on divorce; about the Catholic heroine "he was afraid she had some tiresome deep conviction." Barbara, the woman in question, echoes Ronald, from *The Bachelors*:

> . . . Ever since her conversion she had met sophisticated women who, on the subject of Catholicism, sneered like French village atheists, and expected to be excused from normal good manners, let alone intelligence, on this one subject.

She explains her pilgrimage, moreover, in terms which leave a layman puzzled:

> . . . Barbara knelt only for a few moments and very quickly left. . . .
> "What a lot of trouble for such a small moment, here and there," Suzi said.
> "It's an act of presence," Barbara said, "as when you visit a bereaved friend and there's nothing to say. The whole point is, that a meeting has materialised."

Since it's already been explained that subjective feelings don't count, nor does the physical difficulty of getting to the shrine, and since the places themselves are not necessarily the same, owing to accumulated rubble and building, as well as to the planetary movement of the earth itself, the "materialisation" of the "meeting" seems somewhat tenuous, and its explanation suspiciously pat.

THESE, OF COURSE, are the objections of a non-initiate: but the fact that they're prompted by Mrs. Spark's writing may have literary relevance. At times, one's tempted to feel that the Catholics have all the best lines, and that the others are mostly boobs or boors. True, in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, the novice nun finds in the Church "quite a number of Fascists much less agreeable than Miss Brodie": but in the context of the rest of it, even this assumes an air of "as long as they're Catholic, anything goes." To say so may be to reveal a typically non-Catholic interest in works rather than faith; but then works are our business here.

In this way, the works of Muriel Spark are disconcerting—and not only because they assume religious beliefs that not everyone finds true or attractive. More damaging, it seems to me, are the religio-philosophical assumptions which determine the plots of many of her books. These, I suggest, detract quite seriously not only from surface credibility, but also from the purposes which seem to underline it.

In *The Comforters*, her first novel, Caroline Rose hears supernatural voices, which turn out to be responsible for the book. They might be a mere delusion; but no, in a trick ending, a letter destroyed before it's sent must be presumed to have reached her: so the Snark *was* a Boojum after all. Fantasy, you may say: don't be so heavy-handed. *Robinson*, the next book, doesn't play so obvious a game with the reader; here, fancy and the supernatural are merely alluded to, brushed lightly in. They return in some of the stories in *The Go-Away Bird* (1958); and in *Memento Mori* a series of telephone calls ("Remember you must die") has no earthly source. In *The Ballad of Peckham Rye*, the principal character is "one of the wicked spirits that wander through the world for the ruin of souls": one of my Catholic friends quite seriously remarked that this was an emissary of the Devil. "There are only two religions, the spiritualist and the Catholic," says the hero of *The Bachelors*, himself marked with the holy taint of epilepsy. One gradually comes to realise, then, that there's more to this than fantasy. In the terms we're supposed to assent to, it's pretty close to realism.

On this point, again, argument is no doubt useless. If you believe any of it, perhaps you can believe in the Devil and all his works. But whether you do or you don't is partly irrelevant to the point that seems to follow: that the absoluteness of some of the moral judgments here is an over-simplification. If the Devil or his minions walk the earth, it's surely in subtler disguises than that of young men with rudimentary horns, like Dougal Douglas in *The Ballad of Peckham Rye*. If they don't, human beings are surely more complex than the "villains" that Mrs. Spark presents us with in the shape of, say, Patrick Seton in *The Bachelors* or some of the dying conspirators in *Memento Mori*.

THIS, I THINK, is the relevance of Mrs. Spark's cocksure narrator, telling us all what's funny and what only makes people laugh. Reading

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the beginning of *The Mandelbaum Gate*, I was puzzled by the echo of a familiar tone. It wasn't simply the well-known (and effective) Spark technique of repeating phrases, as in archaic verse-forms, with variant resonance each time. It was a tone of playful detachment linked with knowing assurance. It was the tone—I suddenly remembered—of Aldous Huxley's charade-like novels. It isn't a constant in Mrs. Spark's own work; but one senses it there, arranging the plot, classifying the characters, sweeping some away to ruthless oblivion, and all the time maintaining an obtrusive omniscience. Perhaps if the next world's the truly real one, it seems to her legitimate to be fairly summary with this.

So it might be, indeed, if Muriel Spark were no more of a novelist than Huxley. Quite clearly, however, she eludes some of the dangers to which, as I suggest, her own concerns expose her. Religion, after all, isn't only a set of beliefs: it's also a focusing of attention on subjects that many people ignore. G. S. Fraser, in his study of *The Modern Writer and His World*, has some words on Evelyn Waugh that apply with equal force to Muriel Spark. Perhaps his greatest gift, he says, "is for combining farce with the sense of anguish. . . . I personally find Waugh's way of turning our obsessions with violence and disaster, our age's gift for disorder, into absurd farce more morally congenial than . . . archaically 'heroic' attitudes." He doesn't add that part of the force in Waugh's earlier novels, as in those of Mrs. Spark, derives from the tension between explicit beliefs and experienced chaos, between categorising the characters and investigating them, between "playfulness" in this special sense and an awareness that it's dangerous to play with the only life we're sure of.

Thus, despite her schemata, even Mrs. Spark's "villains" engage some sympathy: her "wicked spirit," indeed, is extremely funny. When she strikes fire from themes like death and old age, there's a greater depth of foreboding than would seem natural in a fully assured context of belief. When she's pert or pat, one seems to detect defensiveness as well as complacency; and not all her characters are puppets or *images d'Epinal*.

Right from the beginning, indeed, she's shown evidence of warmth as well as of sparkle. Oddly enough, this emerges most in her African stories, in *The Go-Away Bird* or in "The Curtain Blown by the Breeze" in *Voices at Play*:

> A storm in the Colony was such that before it broke the whole place was spasmodic like an exposed nerve, and after it was over the body of the world from horizon to horizon moved in a slow daze back into its place. Before it broke there was little wind, then a pearly light, then an earthen smell; the birds screamed and suddenly stopped, and the insects disappeared. Afterwards the flying ants wriggled in a drugged condition out of the cracks in the walls, found their wings, and flew off in crazy directions, the more extreme colours of the storm faded out of the sky in a defeated sort of way, and the furniture felt clammy from the ordeal.

There seems to me an energy and sympathy in that description that one misses in some of the more brittle, more "typically Muriel Spark" books. It returns, notably, in the Arab sections of *The Mandelbaum Gate*, which seem to have quickened her imagination more than the plight of her Western leading characters. They—Freddy, the insignificant diplomat, and Barbara the half-Jewish Catholic convert—find themselves in the divided city of Jerusalem, harassed by the mutually hostile officials of both sides, but drawn ineluctably into the devious intrigues that cross-thread the public controversy. Freddy has an aged mother in Harrogate, persecuted by and persecuting an equally aged companion, who finally kills her—an expansion of a theme briefly noted in *The Bachelors*. Barbara has a lover, Harry Clegg, but as a Catholic can't yet marry him because of his own earlier union; she's also emotionally tied to a fellow-schoolmistress back home. In a strange few days when Freddy loses his memory and Barbara her timidity, they wander dangerously through Jordan, solving their nagging problems by a kind of divine insouciance and ruthlessness. Personally, I found this ruthlessness unattractive, as I found the fellow-schoolmistress a caricatured figure of evil. In these ways, I think, *The Mandelbaum Gate* harks back to some of the deeper faults of its predecessors, without so continuous a sizzle of wit. There's a similarly arbitrary note in some of the plotting: how can a *photocopied* British birth certificate, I wonder, be "brilliantly forged" on the outskirts of Jericho? Would a priggish virgin teacher, just out from England, hop obediently into bed with a middle-aged and unattractive Arab? Would the wife of an Embassy official—both of them spies—use as a clandestine post-box a tree in full view of the household?

Nevertheless, if these hesitations linger, there's no doubt that *The Mandelbaum Gate* marks a real advance. It shows more signs of revision than some of Mrs. Spark's earlier novels, which seemed sometimes to have been dashed off regardless. It covers a broader and less eccentric canvas than some of her excursions into fantasy or the occult. And if its wit is less constant, it still retains the keen ear for overheard speech that most clearly marked her play *Doctors of Philosophy* (1963), together with a deepening of sympathy that began in *Memento Mori* and continued, though playfully, in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*. Fire, brightness, the

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impact of flint, brilliance, sudden disruptive discharge—they're all still there, "visibly alight in ashes"; the flaws in the gem are there too. But it's the "luminous effect" that one remembers.

Oxford Without Tears

Oxford. By James Morris. *Faber*, 42s.

James Morris' *Oxford* is good at all those matters that have nothing to do with mind: gossipy anecdotes; portraits of Oxford "characters"; vignettes from the city and the university; water-colours. The only thing that is taxing about it is its sweet determination never to tax anybody. On every page there is some little pointless fact of the kind that children's comics trail along the top of their pages. "Old Dr. Routh had a dog named Romulus which had been brought up by a cat, and washed its face with its paws." "Movable stage-scenery was used for the first time in England during a performance at Christ Church in 1583." And so, with equable remorselessness, on. Nothing is ever done with any such fact or picture except to alchemise it into candy-floss. There are good photographs, and there are neat quips at which an Oxonian is expected to writhe with a pleasurable flush: "Oh, you have us there, sir." " 'Ever since the Scientific Renaissance in the 17th century,' says an announcement in the Museum of the History of Science, 'Oxford has been renowned for its Dodos.' "

It covers a great deal of ground, or skims and scours it. The vocabulary is specious, uncaring, and repetitive; "fructify" and "testy" and "endearing" are called on to do more work than lazy words can manage, even when they are helped by a sterner modernity: "edgy" and "confrontations." (An American professor has recently suggested that we might look upon "confrontation" as a euphemism for copulation —almost the only way of making its pompous ubiquity tolerable.) Mr. Morris, who does not embarrass himself easily, goes in four times for that hoariest of false-beards: "I like to think."

> Looped over the high iron railings outside you may still see an old rosary, whose provenance nobody seems to know, but which I like to think was placed there by an Irish student nurse, or perhaps a nun, in gratitude for mercies granted by His Lordship to her hot-blooded lover.

For "I like to think," read "I have managed to drub myself into concocting." All very readable and skilful, though the professionalism does not extend to impeccable accuracy and does tend to proffer the twice-told tale. On one page, the sycamore in the High Street is "one of the most important trees in Europe," on another it is "one of the most important trees in the world." Occasionally the bright-eyed speed is not quite apt, as when Oxfam is introduced as "the newest and raciest of Oxford's spiritual brotherhoods." The fatigued tastelessness suggests a misguided modernising cleric.

It is sure to be a best-seller, and precisely because it so slavishly fulfils the expectations—and nothing more. Hardly for a moment does it transcend the limitations of this predictable *genre*, the whimsical chattering travel-book. Donnish, one would once have said. Edible snails in Wychwood Forest? "Nary a *helix pomatia* slobbers through the greeneries of Oxford herself." The only occasions when Mr. Morris' slobberings through the greeneries really stick in my throat are when he comes up against something serious for once. As in the diminutive anecdote about the prisoner who from his cell could see the orrery high inside Nuffield Tower: "The kind-hearted Warden asked if the convict might not be allowed across the road to see the orrery more closely. Permission was refused, however, for the prisoner had a weakness for instruments of a blunter kind." Mr. Morris thinks that Oxford is "smug."

On two subjects he writes like a man who is thinking and caring. The first is Lord Nuffield, who strops the style into sharpness: "the dullest and the saddest of the Oxford characters," "this infelicitous millionaire—who died without an heir, without a religion and with few friends." The other is the First World War and its importance to Oxford. Apart from these, Mr. Morris never rises much above affectionately "testy" garrulity about this "piebald prodigy." Oxford's wish to be thought of as sweetly, maddeningly, eccentric is altogether pandered to. It could have done with some of the asperity of Angus Wilson's *Crazy Crowd*. The praise of dappled things and pied beauty turns out to have as its climax, not "Praise him," but "Praise us."

The portrait of the city is a great deal better, simply because it doesn't lend itself to charades and footling. But whenever a subject has to be mentioned on which people might feel strongly, might have principles, might actually be offended—then Mr. Morris hides away in bluff neutrality. Until 1950 Oxford graduates used to have the right to elect two M.P.s, but "the graduate vote was abolished by the Labour Government of 1945, which thought it smacked of privilege." They didn't think it, they knew it, and the only question is whether or not Oxford graduates ought to have such a privi-

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lege, not whether it does constitute a privilege to have two votes in a country where everybody else has one. Mr. Morris has no style available that could deal with anything that matters, though he dutifully and ludicrously goes through the motions. "Squalid episodes, every one: and there is squalor still in Oxford, Heaven knows." Heaven may, but the style doesn't.

REVIEWERS are always being reproved for speaking as if their author ought to have produced a different kind of book. But it might have been hoped that Mr. Morris was up to the task of writing an account of Oxford—past and present, city and university—that satisfied the wish for chocolates and the wish for real food. His book would not have had to succumb utterly to cerebral aridity if it had taken genuine notice of those things in Oxford which are important and interesting to think about. He has some characteristically showy and slovenly allusions to other institutions—"quick as a flash to Harvard and the Huntingdon": so quick as a flash as not to leave time for spelling it right. But there is no real comparison with other universities, just as only a few pages are given to the teaching which some people think quite important at Oxford. ("Learning" gets a chapter, but that is mainly from the dons' end because that allows chit-chat about "characters.") Nothing much about what distinguishes Oxford, for good or ill—such as that an undergraduate is not examined on a subject only by the man who has taught it to him. Nothing about the segregation of sexes by colleges. And not more than a passing mention of the huge differences in wealth between the colleges. Mr. Morris is vaguely, and therefore inoffensively, liberal: the proportion of public-school undergraduates is "still much higher than it should be." But since this remark occurs in a context of never thinking about anything, it is a rubber knife. I suppose that the whole confection will be thought to be delightfully in the Oxford manner, which is the last twist of the rubber knife.

Christopher Ricks

That Total Situation

Under Pressure: the Writer in Society: Eastern Europe and the U.S.A. Edited by A. ALVAREZ. *Pelican*, 3s. 6d.

THIS WAS a radio programme, and now it's a book. But it isn't a book, it's a nightmare New York intellectuals' cocktail party, with everybody playing Henry Adams—doom! doom! doom! The individually recorded tapes have been edited and the pieces spliced to make the thing sound like a group conversation on the theme, especially obsessive to the visiting Englishman, of America the intellectuals' monster land. Radio hasn't been so frightening since Orson Welles made us believe the Martians were descending on New Jersey.

America is often enough a frightening country, a violent country, and more than either it is an unimaginably self-satisfied country, for here it is the common dream, not the God of the philosophers, that has been made flesh. But literary intellectuals are usually too assertive in conversation to be the most reliable guides to this society. And when the individual voices are edited—as they always are on radio and television, and Mr. Alvarez brings acuteness and sombre emotions to this technique—to make the thing sound like the American *élite*'s last word on their monster land, then I can only say, knowing these voices, that the panic is more in Mr. Alvarez than it is in his assembled cast of characters.

Why, given the power of selection and manipulation that is behind any voice on radio and image on television, should I grant more disinterestedness to intellectuals in mass communications than I do to contemporary poets and novelists who believe that all reality is in the mind of the beholder? When an American highbrow serves on a discussion programme and thus surrenders the fine edge of his opinions to the smiling salesmen and other Richard-Nixon-types who mastermind such programmes, he knows that his thoughts on Oedipus and Joe Christmas couldn't mean less to these adjustable faces and professionally sane voices; he will be complimented not for the truth of his observations but because he talked and talked, sometimes recklessly, and so gave the show "pace." Mr. Alvarez is in another class and he is not in the same business, but he combines quick, sensitive, jittery reactions with a critic's love of intellectual pattern and social *Tendenz*—so America comes out all super highways and impersonal jet planes driving us to the usual cheerless awareness of the Lines of Force that imprison The Human Condition in The Age of Totalitarianism.

PUTTING TOGETHER Norman Mailer, James Baldwin, Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Hardwick, Lionel Trilling, Saul Bellow, Murray Kempton, Richard Blackmur, Richard Hofstadter, Norman Podhoretz, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Philip Rahv, etc., is impossible as well as undesirable. But one is struck by the fact that Mr. Alvarez has conceived of their group conversation, that he has in a sense written it by the

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sombreness with which he has collated selections from their tapes, that this show has all too much "pace," that the twilight spirits of our American literary-intellectual *élite* get loonier and blacker, that there is not a light moment in the book, not a drink, not a joke, not one funny observation, that all is Crisis, *Gotterdämmerung, Angst.* Even the comedian Zero Mostel, who normally can't enter a room without making even a psycho-analyst laugh, comes on here as if he were Gordon Craig: "You can't afford to put anything on. If I were to say, 'I want to do *Timon of Athens* to-morrow, damn everybody, I think this play should be seen. It has a message for all Romans'—I couldn't do it. It's impossible to do because I haven't got the wherewithal, the money. It's all money, it is a commercial problem...."

Nominally, of course, this book is about writers under pressure in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, as well as in 57th Street. But Mr. Alvarez didn't make it to the Russian power-house, which would have given him a pressure gauge, and his observations of the writer's situation in the satellites are plainly too far removed from the native languages, literatures, histories, to be anything but themes introducing the main feature, which is the U.S.A. Mr. Alvarez was in the country January–February 1964, and has much to say about the dismay into which Kennedy's assassination plunged us all. But notice how he opens up:

> The first warning I got was in the plane, as we approached New York. "This is John F. Kennedy," said a soothing voice on the intercom. "Please fasten your seat belts and refrain from smoking." My instinctive reaction was: we are flying too high. Admittedly, I'd been dozing and had woken in a panic, but none of the other explanations seemed feasible: a terrible coincidence with the pilot's name? A sick joke? A happening? It took me some moments to work out that what had been announced was Idlewild by its new name. It swallowed us all up, gleaming, warm, and sound-proofed; even the Customs men were friendly. Yet that sense of being put off-centre in a macabre way—a sense of the absurd —seemed to pervade everything and everybody.

"The first warning I got"—"panic"—"a sick joke"—"it swallowed us up"—"even the Customs men were friendly"—"off-centre in a macabre way." This is an objective programme on radio? Of course I believe in Mr. Alvarez' panic and I am sure that he believes, believed before he came, believed more when he left, that in America the mass society in which the writer lives "is becoming even more massive, more monolithic, devious, and even more anxious to swallow him up whole." Mr. Alvarez does see a lot of swallowings-up. But he has James Baldwin coming in on this speech with:

> I said it was terrible to be an American success. I mean that after all, one fine morning, no matter how I play it, I've got to sit down in front of that typewriter and face a page on which there is nothing written yet. It begins at page one, may end at page seven hundred. When it ends at page seven hundred, you've gone through a voyage and you're not the same person you were when you typed page one.

What has this commonplace lament, in itself neurotic with *non sequiturs*, to do with Mr. Alvarez' Orwellian jitters, *Confidential Agent?* Why *does* Baldwin's grousing follow Alvarez' catastrophism as if it were in agreement and elaboration? Why is the first voice Mr. Alvarez records on arriving in the country of assassination that of Norman Mailer complaining: "We'd gotten into a curious kind of complacency during the Kennedy years, because all sorts of rather interesting, gossipy things were happening all over the place, yet nothing was happening, no violence was erupting"?

It's all in the mind of the beholder. Mr. Alvarez is just naturally a reader of downward trends, a pointer with alarm, intellectually cheerless. In Poland he had to read the trends, he couldn't read the books. But why is there nothing here of the good books of 1963–64 he could have read in America—*Pale Fire, V, Morte D'Urban, Patriotic Gore, The Moviegoer, Life Studies*? Why so much about the mass age, the Crisis of Identity, the Violent Under Forces Of American Life, and nothing about Roethke, Berryman, Walker Percy, Flannery O'Connor—about language, imagination, work? You know. "They" have their terror and you Americans have yours, *n'est-ce pas*? Tell us about it. Why did the intellectuals take Kennedy's murder harder than anyone else? Arthur Schlesinger says that Kennedy was tough-minded in William James' pragmatic sense, and after Murray Kempton has noted how much all the disorder below the surface in America incited Kennedy's assassination, Alvarez, summing up, observes that in America "you have to make an extreme gesture in order to convince yourself that you exist." Alvarez also thinks that intellectuals, with some shuddering, identified with Oswald—more than half the pieces in the special *New York Review of Books* number on Kennedy were about Oswald!—and that is why, to sum up *this* part, *"AA"* says that "The intellectuals looked in the mirror again and saw their own ids staring stupidly and violently back at them."

There was once an editor in New York who so much loved editing that he had to be told:

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"Write under your own name!" Mr. Alvarez' convocation plainly represents his own low spirits, his half-fascinated suspicion of America, his passion for trend spotting, his impatience. The criticism of society and apprehensions of the future are matters too serious to be left to these pseudo-serious devices of mass communication. This is criticism that is not authenticated by its form, by its internal argument. As Saul Bellow says in the book: "I don't really know that it is a question of the individual artist pitted against the situation, the total situation. I think that's rather too ambitious and makes life impossible for the individual and leads him to self-destruction."

Alfred Kazin

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Unequal Partners. By THOMAS BALOGH. Vols. I and II. Blackwell, 35s. each.

Essays on Economic Policy. By NICHOLAS KALDOR. Vols. I and II. Duckworth, 50s. each.

AS EVEN AMERICANS are aware, Thomas Balogh of Oxford and Nicholas Kaldor of Cambridge are academics of influence in a Labour government in which economists have been nearly as prominent as economic problems. The publication of these volumes of their essays is a suitable occasion to examine the character of their thought and the quality of their recommendations as they have evolved over the decades.

What, then, is to be learned from these generous assortments of learned papers, periodical articles, memoranda, testimony before Royal Commissions, and letters to the editor? One glaring lesson is the fallibility of economic forecasting. Like the majority of their profession, Kaldor and Balogh took for granted permanent American economic superiority and permanent shortages of American dollars. Undeterred by past error, Balogh in the 1960s was equally certain that German trade surpluses would mount and American balance of payment difficulties persist. This forecast, too, looks odd in 1965 at a time when inflation threatens the German economy, the American deficit has been brought under control, and astute European financial experts have taken to worrying about just where a new supply of international liquidity is to come from. Kaldor was wrong about the duration and the gravity of British post-war readjustment. Both writers, generalising from

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the experience of the 1930s, argued that American business cycles would continue to be violent, and that these wide swings would inevitably be transmitted in amplified form to weaker and smaller European economies. In the event, the post-war cycle in the U.S.A. has been notably mild. Moreover, as Europe recovered, its own expansions have on occasion more than cancelled American contradictions. A vehement advocate of central planning, Balogh predicted that

> Russian output per head will surpass that of Britain in the early 1960s and that of the U.S. in the mid-1970s, unless our progress is speeded up.

The lot of the prophet is hard, for very soon after Balogh made his projection, Russian failures of agricultural organisation compelled her to supplement her wheat crop with massive purchases from the West, and Russian rigidities of industrial management compelled her to experiment with decentralised pricing which carries with it faint echoes of free markets. So it has gone. If nothing more, Balogh and Kaldor deserve credit for their honesty in spreading the record of error before their readers.

Granted that the sin of *hubris* afflicts economists as it does laymen. Much of the interest of these volumes is another sort of record, their account of the intellectual progress of two scholars old enough to have learned their economics before the Keynes of the *General Theory*, flexible enough to have profited from the Keynesian revolution, and original enough to have moved, in different ways, beyond their mentor. As Balogh describes his own intellectual history, he began as an orthodox Central European neo-classicist, obsessed with inflation and enamoured of the beauties of the automatic price mechanism. As one of the master's protégés, Balogh became a liberal Keynesian, but he broke with Keynes over the convertibility clauses of the Bretton Woods agreements (which he still regards as an American plot) and here reprints the acrimonious correspondence in *The Times* which signalised the rupture. Balogh now considers himself a radical socialist. His version of radical socialism features distrust of the intentions of advanced countries in general towards the weaker nations, suspicion of the United States and Germany in particular, disbelief in the equity and the efficiency of free price mechanisms, opposition to the European Common Market but sympathy to regional grouping of the weak in Latin America and elsewhere, and general advocacy of radical redistribution of income, wealth, and political power.

Much the more moderate of the two, Kaldor proceeded from a Marshallian-Pigovian concentration upon elasticities and market prices through a Keynesian emphasis upon the maintenance of aggregate demand to his current focus upon the conditions of economic growth and the control of inflation. At a time when fashion tends to deprecate Keynes' importance, Kaldor emphasises the central importance of Keynes and the transforming impact of the *General Theory*. He reprints two essays which exemplify his argument. A 1935 article, "Wage Subsidies as a Remedy for Unemployment," was pre-Keynesian in its reliance upon price and wage elasticities of demand as the basis of argument. But the next item, a 1943 effort entitled "The Quantitative Aspects of the Full Employment Problem in Britain" and addressed to the same issue, shifted over completely to the Keynesian proposition that total employment depended primarily upon the total spending of the community. Kaldor, following Keynes, took private investment and government fiscal policy as the variable elements of total spending. Hence he concentrated upon the tax changes and the public works programmes which an alert government could enlist in the battle against unemployment. Inevitably in later essays Kaldor tended to take full employment for granted and to concentrate his attention upon the requirements of economic growth. Although Keynesian concepts remain useful, they become much more complex.

FROM RATHER DIFFERENT intellectual perspectives, Kaldor and Balogh derive somewhat different economic prescriptions, particularly for the ailments of the underdeveloped world. Balogh is inclined to favour national and regional economic planning, severe discrimination against imports from the advanced nations, and recognition that as matters now stand the poor nations are losing rather than gaining ground. Balogh is convinced that more frequently than not international trade impoverishes the underdeveloped nations and enriches the advanced nations. The reasons why this is so include, by Balogh's account, the differing elasticities of demand for manufactures and primary commodities, the monopoly pricing practices of large industrial corporations in the rich lands, and the economies of scale which are realised in the West but not yet in young, struggling nations.

For his part Kaldor in missions of economic advice which have conveyed him to Chile, Mexico, Turkey, British Guiana, Ghana, India, Ceylon, and Australia has preferred to work through the price system rather than to replace it by direct physical controls. Often his advice has centred upon taxes and tax administrations. Occasionally that advice when adopted by Kaldor's hosts has been followed by riot, strike,

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and civic disorder. Though saddened, Kaldor is no longer astonished by these consequences of tax reform. He notes that

> since I invariably urged the adoption of reforms which put more of the burden of taxation on the privileged minority of the well-to-do, and not only on the broad masses of the population, it earned me (and the governments I advised) a lot of unpopularity, without, I fear, always succeeding in making the property-owning classes contribute substantial amounts to the public purse.

NATURALLY, THE ADVICE Kaldor and Balogh offer their countrymen is a different matter. Although the topic has the fascination of good gossip, an outsider would best refrain from speculation about what either economist said in private audience to Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, or George Brown last October when that hard-pressed trio began to cope with the disorders of the pound sterling. Still it is possible to derive from their published words an analysis of British troubles and a programme for their resolution.

In brief here is Balogh's interpretation of events. Britain is in economic trouble because British investment is too low. In order to raise investment, "consumption must be cut, or at least kept level, while at the same time investment should be given an exceptional stimulus." An agreement with the unions, the cornerstone of an effective incomes policy, is accordingly essential. To facilitate such an agreement and "to overcome the gravest defect of the price-mechanism, namely its inability to generate sufficient saving and investment . . . we obviously need a national plan for employing our resources." Though administered by a government department, this plan must be a direct responsibility of the Prime Minister and his cabinet. The planning agency itself should be headed neither "by a dilettante planner *malgré lui* (as *The Times* aptly described Sir Stafford Cripps' unfortunate choice) or a super-public-relations officer." What the job demands instead is an "economic visionary with energy and technical knowledge backed by the best available brains working in applied economics." These are the vital internal measures needed to insure successful economic growth without inflation. On the international side, the International Monetary Fund must be reformed in a manner "aimed at safeguarding the reserve position of those member countries which are engaged in speeding economic growth against speculative attacks."

Harold Wilson's actual economic policies do bear some resemblances to this design. Consumption *is* being reduced, although it is much less certain whether the vital increase in invest-

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ment is going to occur in the near future. By the time this review appears a national economic plan will no doubt have been promulgated, although the identity of the "economic visionary" needed to administer it has not been disclosed. Britain is eager to liberalise international monetary arrangements and Mr. Fowler's mission to the European financial centres demonstrates that the Americans have themselves become converts to this position. Of course incomes policy remains a sticking point, but it may be an intimation of things to come that on August 2nd of this year the Prime Minister in Commons debate stated that:

> ...if the voluntary system fails, we might have to provide for statutory reference of every claim for increased incomes above the norm to go to an expanded and strengthened Prices and Incomes Board, just as in the absence of voluntary agreements we might have to require a compulsory early warning system for reference to the Board of proposed price increases in cases which seem to require justification.

Thus if the Labour government retains office for another year or two, if the Chancellor's deflationary measures do not restrict investment more than consumption, if the pound recovers its strength, if the national plan is a skilful document, and if incomes policy acquires legal teeth, then something like a Baloghian policy will have its trial run.

ECONOMICS HAS COME a long way since Kaldor and Balogh were young. The gains have of course been uneven. There is a general consensus in the trade on the nature of the domestic, essentially Keynesian, measures to be taken in order to maintain or restore full employment. There is much less agreement analytically or practically on the international front. Here old dilemmas persist—conflicts between full employment and payments deficits, international specialisation and trade discrimination, and international management and domestic sovereignty. What the character of these persisting difficulties suggests is the present limits of economics as an intellectual tool. Increasingly the barriers to development like the barriers to economic growth in the advanced nations are aspects of politics, or sociology, or history. Of what avail was Kaldor's lovingly-designed five tax system if the "socialist" Indian government so feared to offend the rich that it did not adopt it? Do Kaldor's Mexican and Turkish proposals amount to more than subtle exercises when the two governments hesitated to submit them to their parliaments? What good does it do to reform a tax system in the interest of equity and progress if, as in British Guiana, mobs of trade unionists (inspired by their employers) riot against a compulsory savings plan which could only benefit them? In the underdeveloped world, as Kaldor himself has come to believe, the raw facts of *power* are far more important than the quality of the economic analysis which is applied to underdeveloped economies.

English circumstances are more favourable to the amendments of economic analysis. British tax administration is efficient and British tax morality is comparatively high. Although by Kaldor's reckoning, inequity abounds in the British system, it is possible by parliamentary procedures to alter the inequities. Indeed 1965's much maligned Finance Bill took some steps in this direction. Even if the British civil service is unfit to administer an economic plan (as Balogh believes), it is honest, intelligent, and obedient to its masters. Nonetheless, there are in Britain, too, important non-economic restrictions upon the efficacy of the devices of applied economics. Consider again the necessity of high investment, identified as central to English growth by both Kaldor and Balogh. There was a time in the 19th century when British investment was a remarkably high percentage of the national product of a much poorer society. The British innovating spirit was the envy of the world. Yet in the last two decades of that same century the German and the American businessman began to catch up with and then surpass their British rivals. The American and the German, not to mention the French and the Japanese, economies are to-day considerably more dynamic than the British.

WHY DON'T British *entrepreneurs* invest more of the profits which they earn? Why don't they gamble more frequently on organisational and technical novelties? Why don't they pursue export markets with more vigour? A government can encourage innovation and export by tax advantages and export subsidies. Suppose, all the same, that businessmen fail to respond. The reasons for the possible failure have little to do with economics. By now repeated discussion has rendered them a banal list which includes the cult of the amateur, the primitivism of trade unions, the class cast of the educational system, residual fears of unemployment, pervasive distrust of novelty, low status of businessmen, and British complacency that somehow, yet again, Britain will muddle through.

Can one anticipate that an economic plan *à la* Balogh or an intricate system of income controls and tax revisions *à la* Kaldor will have much effect upon this array of traditions, habits, superstitions, and emotions? If someone had

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asked me before I read these four volumes whether economic analysis was central to the resolution of the persistent difficulties of the British economy, I should have said no. After reading (and, in the main, admiring) Balogh and Kaldor, I should offer the identical answer.

Robert Lekachman

Manning, Pratolini

Friends and Heroes. By OLIVIA MANNING. *Heinemann*, 30s.

Bruno Santini. By VASCO PRATOLINI, translated by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL. *Chatto & Windus*, 30s.

I HAVE the feeling I am blind to something in Olivia Manning's novels, some concealed asperity or design, which others enjoy. She has now completed her Balkan trilogy. In the third and last volume her protagonists Guy and Harriet Pringle, driven out of Bucharest by the German occupation, have landed up in Athens. Two of Guy's ungrateful protégés in the British Council-like "Organisation" have got there before him, and haven't wasted their time. They have fixed lectureships for themselves, and likewise fixed it that Guy shall not be offered one, and shall in fact be hustled on to Alexandria out of the way. Harriet is all for tooth-and-nail retaliation, whilst Guy, in disgust, is inclining towards submission, when the question is settled for them by the declaration of war between Italy and Greece. In the course of the rest of the novel the shifting personal politics within the "Organisation" gradually yield the foreground to the war itself. Guy fills his idleness by putting on a revue for the British air force camps; and Harriet, more neglected than ever, begins to despair of him—a man whose generousness and idealism represent, she begins to feel, a kind of willed stupidity. "To someone so enamoured of the general, could the particular ever really mean anything?"

Harriet shares the author's eye for the particular, and through her we study the detail—wasted upon Guy—of the jockeying and finagling within the Organisation, as well as the physical detail of their winter and spring in wartime Athens. Harriet also falls in love, nearly has a nervous breakdown—fostered by despair of Guy, and despair for Greece after the German intervention, as well as by chronic hunger—and is reunited to her husband in the final *débâcle* and evacuation.

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As a design it's fine. There is a continuous pleasure, and perhaps something more, in watching the chessboard of expatriate intrigue (and of Harriet's love-affair) daily jumbled and rearranged by the larger drama. The novel gives you, rather exactly, the shape of a period lived through. The stages are delicately discriminated; for instance, the gradual cooling of the Greek welcome to the British (who offend the starving Athenians by feeding their pets), or the moment when Guy and his friends, knowing that it's only a matter of time before the Germans are in Athens, tacitly give up intelligent discussion and take to telling one another stories and limericks and "talking about life in a large general way."

And Harriet's eye for the physical scene, though it is often merely doing duty for the author's, is a precise and delicate one too. Olivia Manning has the trick of chic but exquisite simile in her descriptions; and since Harriet does a lot of lonely wandering and looking about in Athens there is a sufficient dramatic pretext for exercising it. I get a distinct thrill of pleasure from this: "It had been raining and the sky, bagged with wet, hung in dark boas of cloud over the hills." And this: "... they saw a yellowish sea indolently spreading its frills of foam like a bored bridge player displaying a useless hand."

The trouble with the novel is that the minutiae, which are being studied under the shadow of the greater drama, are so very minute —or not so much minute, for things in Jane Austen are often that, as thin. Partly, I think, it is the effect of an odd attitude towards dialogue. I was puzzled by this in *The Great Fortune* and am not much less puzzled by it in *Friends and Heroes*. Olivia Manning has a way of telling you what her characters talked about, not only without showing them actually saying it—which is a perfectly sensible procedure—but without conveying any impression of, or attributing any quality to, what is said.

> Awkward in his distrust of Gracey, Guy did his best to give an account of the Rumanian break-up.
>
> The two men were talking about Cookson's party when Mrs. Brett passed on her way into the café. ...
>
> Harriet did not want to hear about Miss Dunne, but Alan had started a long story about Miss Dunne's taking all the hot water for a bath, then blaming him when he used what remained because she wanted to wash her stockings.

The cumulative effect of this trick is to give us an odd feeling of being told about scenes which, as far as we are concerned, never took place—which exist, as it were, as notes "to be expanded" in the author's first draft.

Olivia Manning strikes one as being worried about conversation, especially conversation within groups. She is privately convinced that most of what people say on such ordinary occasions is entirely predictable and very boring; but she takes the conventional view that novels should contain conversations, and dutifully transcribes them, in all their predictability, or, fearing to weary the reader, summarises them. She has not the ruthlessness of Ivy Compton-Burnett in simply jettisoning the elements in fiction (they would in this case, of course, be very different elements) which don't happen to interest her.

The thinness extends a little beyond her conversations. I found myself being more interested by Harriet's running diagnosis of Guy's character in this novel than I was in *The Great Fortune*. All the same, hadn't Harriet really made her diagnosis, once and for all, from the start? She may tell herself that she is discovering Guy, but all it amounts to is corroborating, again and again, her original judgment. Guy doesn't develop or blossom for us as a fictional character. And neither does the much-praised Prince Yaki. He is a nice creation, a Mischa Auer part, with his greed, his Etonian accent, his graceful and melancholy sponging and his tattered fur-coat given to "m'old Dad" by the late Czar. But he doesn't develop; he not only repeats himself, but repeats himself in the very same words—like, shall we say, Billy Bunter. It becomes wearisome, and less of a joke for us than for the characters in the novel, that he never forgets to mention how he came by his fur-coat.

STILL, WITH ALL one's reservations about Olivia Manning's novel, it has an essential virtue which Pratolini's lacks; I mean, authenticity. Pratolini is, and understandably, one of the most popular Italian novelists writing, and his books have been turned into very successful films (*e.g.*, *Cronaca familiare*). Italian critics, making one of those distinctions which confuse the English mind, described *Bruno Santini* (originally *La costanza della ragione*) as representing the "transition from neo-realism to realism." What it certainly strikes me as representing is the running to seed of the grand tradition of 19th-century realism.

The novel relates the childhood and adolescence of a young Florentine, Bruno Santini, the son of a factory-worker killed in the Libyan desert. The *milieu* (very familiar from neo-realist films) is an industrial suburb of Florence, a wilderness of waste ground, polluted streams, and road-side jukebox cafés, sprawling round towering new factories or modern blocks of flats. For the inhabitants of Rifredi, the centre

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of life is the Gali plant: "There isn't a thing that's bigger for a man from Rifredi, the Gali plant is the universe, the Gali plant is Mecca, the Gali plant is all of life." The hero's father worked for Gali's, and Bruno will not feel himself a man till he has gained his entrée to it. In his boyhood mythology Marilyn and Lollo mingled with the latest Genevoise milling-machine. The hope and future of Italy is felt, without irony on the author's part, to belong with the great factory.

Bruno is the child of a time still paying for the Fascist "twenty years." He came to consciousness in a black-market Italy, nightly employed in pillaging the genial and drunken negro soldiers of their Lucky Strikes and canned food. One of Bruno's friends is the bastard of a negro G.I. Another, Benito, is the son of one of Mussolini's original *squadristi*; and out of his double-edged feelings towards what he regards as his father's cowardice and betrayal, he argues that what Italy needs is a revived Fascism, more lawless and extreme—so that the left-wing reaction, when it comes, will be a lasting one this time. Bruno himself, as a boy, has modelled himself on his proxy father, Milloschi, an engineer in the Gali plant, an ex-partisan and political activist. And when he sees how the enemies of Mussolini are treated in the new Italy—Milloschi is blacklisted and finally squeezed out of the factory—he is half-tempted by Benito's theories. By this time, however, he has graduated from teenage-gang sex to first love; and from this he advances—having had to see his girl-friend struck down by miliary T.B.—to a foothold in maturity. He compromises with the authorities, who suspect him of Communism, finds a new girl, and to-morrow starts work at Gali's.

This is the sketchiest possible résumé of a packed and, in a sense, very skilfully constructed novel. The central narrative device, by which the story unfolds itself, partly in his words and partly in hers, in the course of a final showdown between Bruno and his possessive mother, ties the past and present together cunningly and economically. One wonders how a novel so expertly contrived and so solidly documented can seem so false.

I thought to begin with that it was simply the translation, which is certainly pretty agonising: "Sure, go ahead, moan and groan, if you don't like this sort of story, what kind of a boy are you? Rodolfo, when he was your age, devoured them like bread. To have a mother like me, he thought he was touching paradise," and so on. (It is also inaccurate. "I can still see him up there, this charlatan, with everything he's got showing..." sounds odder than it needs, since *cialtrone* doesn't mean "charlatan," it means "lazy good-for-nothing." Likewise, for some reason, *signorine* repeatedly appears as *segnorine*.) But the trouble is more fundamental. It is that the techniques of realism have been abused in the novel; something merely sentimental and general has been fleshed out, systematically, with plausible and specific detail. A hail of detail beats down on the reader. And half of it, in fact—the noting of every commonplace gesture, every cigarette lit and smoked—is not meant to register on the mind, but to work subliminally, like film music. It is not there to inform the mind, according to the "scientific" aims of traditional realism, but simply to heighten our sense of participation. And skilfully as we are shepherded over the contours of Bruno's youthful career, the sense of participation is all we are left with. The idea hinted at in the original title—

> You'd say that only we, the young ones, have reached the age of reason. And it is our duty to put reason to use, relentlessly, if we want to really see the world and the hidden side of people's faces: to judge them, these old people who would like to go on nursing us like babies; mothers and fathers of all kinds, those from whom we were born and those to whom we have entrusted the custody of our ideas. We must shed the light of reason, it is as necessary as the light we need to put one foot in front of the other; and it must be done because we are not guilty.

—is the palest ghost of an idea, forgotten as soon as it is proffered. The shape of the novel is a dead thing, which offers us plenty of vicarious emotion, but proposes nothing to the mind.

P. N. Furbank

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Indonesia Confronted

IT IS CUSTOMARY for the traveller returning from Indonesia to deliver a sharp verdict on the disastrous economic balance-sheet of the Sukarno régime, to describe the President's oratorical exhibitions in tones either of irony or distaste, to complain of his irascible temper, to speculate about his eventual successors, and to end up with a paean of admiration for the régime's success in creating, from this vast and heterogeneous archipelago, a nation "one and indivisible," conscious of itself and its greatness, and imbued with a fervent and single-minded national will.

Indonesian officials and intellectuals, even those concerned with economic affairs, are usually ready to admit with a shrug of the shoulders the shortcomings of the régime on the material plane. Polite boredom is their normal reaction to anyone who expresses an interest in facts and figures. But as soon as one touches on the subject of the national unitary mystique with its elaborate symbolism and the striking successes it has achieved, their eloquence is inexhaustible. And the foreign visitor—even if he manages to leave the artificial paradise of the Hotel Indonesia in Djakarta, he rarely penetrates (if only for lack of transport) beyond the touristic high-spots of Java and Bali and the surviving enclaves of foreign commercial enterprise—ends up by being persuaded that this great, silent and mysterious country, throbbing to the appeal of its national hero, Bung Karno, has found the secret path to a mystic communion of souls.

All the "new nations" are at grips with the problem of forging a national identity, of inculcating common reflexes and a consciousness of mutual solidarity among divergent human groups penned inside more or less artificial and accidental frontiers. All their régimes employ, with varying degrees of success, the same familiar recipes long ago developed by European nationalist movements: education in the service of patriotism, the daily celebration of the cult of national leadership, national heroes, national symbols and national myths, and permanent mobilisation against an indispensable common enemy. The exotic transposition of the myths and magic formulas of the deified race or nation sometimes prevents us from recognising the old familiar face of *l'Europe des patries*. In this respect Indonesia is no exception, but simply an extreme case. Nowhere else has the subordination of every other interest and concern to this unique preoccupation been carried to such obsessive, disconcerting and ruinous lengths. Almost every single manifestation of this feverish nationalism, every one of the slogans it has culled from all the ideologies of the world, can be found elsewhere; but the combination forms an incomparable orgy of synthetic emotions. In so far as a collective psychosis controlled by a charismatic leader is accessible to reason, the case of Indonesia deserves analysis.

HERBERT LUETHY *recently concluded a long study tour of South-east Asia in preparation for his forthcoming work on the history of colonialism. He is Professor of History in Zurich, and the author of a book on France* (The State of France, *1955*), *and two scholarly volumes on French economic history. Among his recent articles in* ENCOUNTER *are "Has Switzerland a Future?" (December 1962), "Culture and the Cold War" (June and August 1963), "Calvinism and Capitalism" (January 1964), and "The Folly and the Crime: Thoughts on 1914" (March 1965).*

This study was, of course, written before Indonesia's tensions and contradictions, herein described, exploded into the current violence.

The Impossible Federation

BHINNEKA TUNGGAL IKA—"unity in diversity"—is the fine motto, worthy of a true federalist State, which decorates the national coat of arms of Indonesia, devised by President Sukarno himself. Yet, ever since he has reigned alone, Sukarno has never ceased to denounce the "demon of federalism, the instrument of imperialism." The history of the Indonesian Republic is the history of the failure of federalism, and most of its problems are the result of this failure.

The basic elements of the story can be summed up in a few simple facts of human geography. An immense archipelago of some three thousand islands—equivalent in extent, if not in surface area, to the continent of Europe from Lisbon to Moscow—"the Indies" or "Insulindia" or "Indonesia" is a geographical entity without historical, ethnic, or linguistic unity. There are a score or more major languages and some two hundred local languages or distinct dialects. It is also without cultural unity—whether one uses the word "cultural" in its primitive sense of an agrarian mode of life or

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whether one applies it to a people's customs, mental habits, or religious beliefs. Under a veneer of lax Mohammedanism (diluted to the point of imperceptibility) ancestral animism, rarefied syncretistic sects, pockets of petrified Hinduism, of militant Islamism, of Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant), co-exist in compact groups in this infinitely varied and scattered world. Islam is the official religion, and according to Government statistics 80 or 90 per cent of the population subscribe to it (though it is in fact ignored by the great majority). But far from being a source of unity, it has for centuries been a permanent source of discord and civil strife. The Moslem insurrections of 1958–1962 were crushed by the present régime, whose official ideology regards the Islamic penetration as being among the "foreign colonisations" Indonesia has undergone. In fact the régime can claim credit for an unusual degree of religious tolerance based on indifference and eclecticism.

Historically speaking, the Indonesian Republic is and can only be the successor State to the Netherlands East Indies. The efforts of "Greater-Indonesian" ideologues—in particular, the late Muhammad Yamin, court bard to Sukarno and prophet of an *Indonesia Raja* stretching from Madagascar to Easter Island—to evoke the historic vision of an Indonesian national empire from the golden pre-colonial age are no more than a resuscitation of old "Greater Javanese" myths which find no echo outside Java. Similarly, the black legend of the 350 years of Dutch oppression—the negative version of Dutch colonial historiography which is what Indonesian historiography at present boils down to—is only a Javanese plaint. After all, the colonial administration did not effectively extend over the mass of outer islands until the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and it left quite different memories in the different parts of the archipelago. (In many of the "outer islands" the Dutch régime is remembered as a time when steamships, provisions, and manufactured goods used to arrive.) Even under the Dutch administration, the history of the Indies was a series of local histories successively and belatedly linked to Java, and it was Java—or rather Batavia, rechristened Djakarta—which assumed the succession from the colonial administration.

JAVA, IN FACT, is the key to the Indonesian problem, if not the whole of the Indonesian problem. The swollen centre of an empire on the whole rather under-populated, this island with its fabulously fertile volcanic soil (less fertile, nevertheless, than its population) covered with irrigated rice-fields but gradually threatened with exhaustion and erosion, contains two-thirds of the population of Indonesia in an area occuping no more than seven per cent of the whole territory: 63 millions out of 96 in 1960. (It has an annual increase of 2.3 per cent and a density of population rapidly approaching an average of 500 per square kilometre and more than 2,000 per square kilometre in the most fertile areas. Sumatra, the biggest and potentially the richest of the islands, has 21 inhabitants per square kilometre.)

"Agrarian reform" is one of the most obsessive and most sterile slogans of Javanese agitation; but no amount of redistribution could assuage the thirst for land in Java itself, especially as there are no *latifundia* to distribute. As for industrialisation, the virtues of which are also ceaselessly extolled, it will be seen that the ideological preferences, indeed the very nature of contemporary "Indonesian socialism," provide a built-in obstacle to it. The third solution periodically announced with a fanfare of trumpets—a plan to encourage voluntary emigration of landless Javanese to other parts of the archipelago that are rich in potentialities but empty of man-power—has made no headway up to now. This is not only because of the age-old religious attachment to the ancestral soil but also as a result of policies which have prevented the "outer islands" from developing their resources and trade and thus creating new poles of attraction.

From the ethnic, cultural, and political points of view, the Sundanese population of South-west Java must be subtracted from the Javanese bloc. This strongly Islamic minority, which forms nearly a quarter of the island's population, has always resisted Javanese ascendancy, and up to 1961 was one of the most dangerous centres of rebellion against the Sukarno régime.

Thus the Javanese "ethno-cultural bloc" forms approximately half the Indonesian population, and there is no other coherent group that is numerically comparable.

Java was once an exporter of rice to the whole archipelago, and this ensured the island's economic preponderance (with three-and-a-half million inhabitants at the end of the eighteenth century). Then it became the administrative centre and large-scale producer of tropical goods under Dutch management (with 47 million inhabitants on the eve of the Japanese invasion). Today, with its plantations for the most part run down and neglected, its factories constantly breaking down, and insufficient rice-fields to feed the population (Indonesia has become the world's biggest rice importer), Java is an immense parasite consuming the substance of the entire archipelago. The exportable surpluses of the principal "outer islands," the foreign exchange they earn, the taxes they pay, are

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drained off by the central government at Djakarta, with its army of nearly a million functionaries, its expenditure on armaments and prestige, and its distributions at reduced prices of imported rice, which alone absorb a quarter of the yield from exports from the entire country.

Since 1958 the publishing of information about the regional distribution of revenue and expenditure has been forbidden. Some newspapers which have done so have been prosecuted for counter-revolutionary activity. But the fragmentary indications which from time to time have filtered through the network of vigilance confirm the impression of evergrowing disequilibrium. Thus the town of Djakarta alone —with 2·9 million inhabitants—contains nearly a quarter of Indonesia's supply of motor vehicles, a sixth of its lorries and a third of its private cars: 41,500 against 88,500 for all the rest of this huge country of 2·3 million square kilometres and a hundred million inhabitants. Thus the administrative capital presents the absurd spectacle of a monstrous permanent traffic jam worthy of the worst Western examples, with Mercedes and Cadillacs circling round one pothole after another at a snail's pace, splashing and squelching through deep pools in the rainy season, and collapsing after a few months into heaps of scrap metal which lie at the side of the road for lack of maintenance and spare parts. (In December 1964, out of Djakarta's 670 buses, all less than three years old, 500 were out of commission—a proportion probably somewhat below the average mortality of Indonesian motorised vehicles.) Meanwhile the rest of the country is almost devoid of means of transport and, outside the touristic routes of Java and Bali, of modern roads, to such an extent that the circulation of supplies and the operation of a trade economy have become impossible. In addition to all this, the stupefyingly parasitic junkshop of a capital consumes vast quantities of petrol at the expense of the State, the subsidised price of four rupiahs a litre corresponding to the market price of half a gramme of rice. Moreover, the government monopolises the remainder of the air and road transport services of the outer islands with their priority arrangements for civil and military officials.

In the case of maritime transport, since its nationalisation in 1958, the picture is worse, in spite of the trebling of the number of ships, which lie rusting in the ports while their crews kick their heels in town awaiting repairs which may never be carried out. Communications between the islands have almost returned to the picturesque medieval rhythm of the indigenous sailing boats. Only the navy is properly equipped, with an imposing though inactive fleet amply supplied with Russian instructors idling away their time in the gloomy messes and clubs of Surabaya.

The vicious circle of Javanese centralisation and the concomitant lethargy of the rest of the country operates faultlessly.

JAVA CONSUMES the country's substance. All it can offer its outer empire in exchange is an army of teachers to inculcate the three *R*s and the "national message," and a locust swarm of civil and military officials who have gradually laid their hands on the whole economy. Thus for Java, Indonesian national unity, interpreted in the sense of the strictest centralisation and ideological *Gleichschaltung,* has become a material question of life-and-death. The Javanese colonisation, "the Indonesian version of the dictatorship of the proletariat," which succeeded Dutch colonisation, distinguishes itself from the latter by an impressive programme of national education and indoctrination of which the régime is justly proud and by a fundamentally destructive movement on the economic plane. These are the two most visible aspects, inseparable and contradictory, of current Indonesian "national socialism." On the one hand the immense effort of schooling, almost entirely academic, *i.e.* ideological and doctrinal, which on its higher levels produces intellectuals at a rapid rate[1]; and on the other hand, an economy in a state of stagnation or retrogression, into which these aspiring intellectuals must be fitted —thus swelling the army of civil servants and socialising, regimenting, and bureaucratising one still viable enterprise after another—for fear of multiplying the intellectual proletariat to an explosive extent.

The Great Javanese Empire

THE HISTORY of Indonesia since independence boils down to the successive elimination of non-Javanese or "Javanised" groups and politicians, represented by the great names, still popular outside Java, of Sutan Sjahrir and

[1] There are some 60 universities, for the most part improvised, many with hardly even a book or a professor to their name, which mass-produce graduates in political science and economics who have read little more than pamphlets and basic primers. Dutch scientific literature, which was alone in making a thorough study of Indonesian problems before 1958, has been rigorously excluded for the past eight years. Foreign literature in general, officially suspect, is difficult to find and even more difficult to assimilate since the few dictionaries available are only obtainable at prohibitive prices on the black market; and in these conditions, Indonesian scientific literature has been unable to advance beyond the embryonic stage.

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Muhammad Hatta—Malays from Sumatra, men of the same ilk, mentally and ethnically, as the present leaders of neighbouring Malaysia, with the calibre of serious and efficient statesmen, but lacking the qualities of charismatic leadership required for the government in Java and embodied by Sukarno. Together with these, or after them, the few brilliant administrators and economists Indonesia possessed (men such as Sumitro and Sjafruddin, and the "realists" concerned with national solvency and living standards) were eliminated in favour of crowd-mesmerising tribunes of the people. The decisive turning-point in 1956–57 was symptomatic of the choice between a "rational" policy and a policy of national mystique. The choice was between giving priority to consolidation and economic recovery at home, which presupposed at least a truce with the outside world and a period of technical and economic co-operation with the West, and giving priority to the revolutionary irredentism of Greater Indonesia and sacrificing all material interests to the liberation of the Papuans of Irian Barat (West New Guinea) in the name of the undivided succession of the old Dutch empire. The vicissitudes and tergiversations of the four-year campaign were as absurd (on the Dutch side as well as on the side of Djakarta) as the bone of contention: this huge chunk of an island without physical resources and with a prehistoric population, in which Holland stubbornly persisted in paying for the maintenance of a last vestige of her Far Eastern empire with an annual deficit of thirty million dollars. Its "liberation" cost Indonesia the collapse of her economy by the time she had taken on the burden of running the new territory and extending the policy of "confrontation" to other parts of this vast Austronesian world which, in the eyes of Sukarno-ist nationalism, is no more than one huge "Indonesia irredenta."

The successive phases of the "struggle for the liberation of Irian Barat," then of "Kalimantan Utara" (North Borneo), marked at once the accession of Sukarno to supreme personal power and the progressive decline of the Indonesian economy. First of all there was the gigantic round-up of Dutch assets and property launched in December 1957. In the course of this, 300,000 Dutchmen, Indo-Europeans, and Indonesians of Dutch nationality were driven out of the archipelago within a few weeks, thus depriving the country of almost the entire personnel which had managed the export business, transport services and technical installations. Then there was the mass mobilisation, the arms build-up, and the extravagant displays of 1962—80 per cent of the national income and foreign credits earmarked for military expenditure, the rest being absorbed by the "Asian Games"—which put the final seal on the disintegration of the monetary economy, and internal and external trade. Finally, there was the suspension of economic relations with Singapore, Malaysia, and bit by bit the rest of the Commonwealth. This was boomeranging economic war which at the end of a year had reduced the country's external trade to a confused jumble of semi-clandestine expedients, disastrous detours, barter deals, smuggling and black marketeering in which every branch of the administration, every enterprise whether public or private, had to shift for itself in order to procure essential materials and the quantities of rice, sugar, shirts and trousers which they needed to distribute to their employees to supplement their nominal salaries paid in worthless banknotes.

Step by step—after having dismantled the private sector of the economy, monopolised industry, distribution, transport, and external trade, and installed the vast bureaucracy of a so-called planned economy—the government had to give up the idea of controlling anything at all. Price controls were abandoned when the official index of food prices, already somewhat hypothetical, rose from a basis of 100 in 1953 and 260 at the time of the establishment of Sukarno's personal rule to 3,000 in the spring of 1963 and drew near 8,000 in the spring of 1965. In order to keep the country supplied with essential foodstuffs, the government finally had to fall back on the holders of (illicit) foreign securities when, the official reserves of foreign exchange having been exhausted, the rupiah, which was supposed to be pegged at 45 to the dollar, dropped to a rate of 10,000 or 15,000 to the dollar on the free market. (Official authorisation of imports financed by illicit private means, and very lucrative in these circumstances, raised the black market rate to 6,000 to the dollar at the beginning of 1965.) All these successive capitulations were represented as heroic gestures: "Indonesia will not import any more capitalist rice... the Indonesian people is patriotic enough to eat maize...."

IT IS TRUE that this country, blessed as it is with so many natural riches, can survive in spite of all this. There has been no shortage of foreign credits to help maintain the ostentatious excesses of a ravenous State, though they have dwindled somewhat of late. Every potential contender had entered the lists after 1958 to replace the Dutch. Up to 1964 the United States were always ready to rescue Sukarno from every shipwreck. The Americans clung tenaciously to their role of guardian angel and money-lender and still tried to come back through the window after having been brutally flung out

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the front door. The Russians have lavished 1,600 million dollars' worth of heavy arms and industrial credits (for projects which mostly never got off the ground) without managing to ingratiate themselves any more than the Americans. The two Germanies, here as elsewhere, have vied with each other in offers of aid. The British Commonwealth, up to the final rupture, provided technical assistance under the "Colombo Plan." The Japanese provide an annual 20 million dollars by way of reparations, together with considerable additional investments repayable in kind (a form of loan/debenture the invention of which, incidentally, Indonesia owes to Dr. Hjalmar Schacht). And finally the Dutch, stripped of all they possessed but restored to favour after the evacuation of New Guinea, and urged on by nostalgia for the golden days of yore, have cautiously returned to replace the Anglo-Saxons who had ousted them and now find themselves ousted in their turn. The merry-go-round may have slowed down a bit, but it hasn't stopped.

The element of vaudeville is never entirely absent from the Indonesian scene. Nothing is more symbolic in this respect than the successive changes in the personnel of Royal-Dutch Shell. Eight years ago they brought in British staff to replace their Dutch employees who were threatened with lynching. When more recently the British were out of grace and the Dutch restored to favour, the pendulum swung back again. There is so much good business to be done in this country provided one knows the ropes and provided one does not risk a capital outlay without being absolutely sure of getting one's money back, that it seems to be worth pocketing any amount of insults.

Nevertheless, in the long run, Indonesia is paying more and more dearly for its illusion of receiving everything while giving nothing and robbing everyone. The glut of foreign loans and "development credits" keeps the régime shakily afloat. But it cannot alter the progressive decline of the economy of a country which in 1939 was the greatest producer of raw materials in the world, and seemed about to become so once more after 1950. Indonesia is strewn with the debris and the rusting scrap metal of all the technical and economic aid programmes in the world—a gloomy illustration of the futility, not to say the harmfulness, of giving assistance to régimes dedicated to retrogression.

Longer than most other assets, oil production has remained a domain of foreign management under many disguises of national control, production sharing devices and government takeover of its least rewarding sections (such as inland distribution at a heavy loss for the budget), protected from outright nationalisation, despite the periodical assaults of Communist trade unions, by a government which draws more than half its foreign exchanges from petrol royalties. There have always been discreet foreign enclaves and temporary bright spots, generally due to some new heavy investment aid from abroad, as presently in the tin islands. But the overall picture is one of progressive "indonesianisation" and equally progressive decay. The output of Indonesia's plantations and mines has fallen to half or a third of what it was in 1939. Most of the rubber plantations have passed the age limit and require replanting. With the reversion to wildcat growing, the fall in quality has been heavier than the decrease in quantity; especially since "confrontation," Indonesia has victoriously competed by dumping of lowest-grade rubber sold at a heavy loss to the national resources. The factories and refineries inherited from the Dutch colonial era or equipped by means of international "development aid" are working at not more than 30 per cent of capacity for lack of maintenance, transport, and competent management—and even these very approximate figures, officially admitted, are probably exaggeratedly high.

Thus the reviled "mercantile and colonialist economy" has been frittered away, not in order to be replaced by the beginnings of balanced industrialisation and an organised national economy but to degenerate by gradual stages towards a simple subsistence economy, agrarian, pre-commercial, and pre-monetary. The most idyllic human aspect of this regression is the return of so many model plantations to squatter or village agriculture based on prehistoric "slash-and-burn" cultivation. If the humble expanse of rice fields had improved the lot of the humble village people, there would be nothing to be said against this return to a "natural economy." Unfortunately, even this simple subsistence economy has suffered from the general recession, with a rice output still below that of 1939 for a population that has increased by 40 per cent. The world is daily called upon to help the hungry brethren; meanwhile the few rationally organised areas of tropical food production are quietly dismantled one after the other. And the more the daily rice bowl diminishes the more necessary it becomes to justify these privations by the necessities of the struggle against a world of cunning and demoniacal enemies.

RETROSPECTIVELY, the victory of Javanese revolutionary nationalism may appear to have been an inevitable victory for the compact mass of Java over the scattering of minorities distributed over a multiplicity of islands without any sense of solidarity or community of interests

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other than the negative one of preserving their regional wealth against Javanese encroachments. All of them rebelled one after the other without being capable of acting in concert. Paradoxically, the bureaucratic centralisation whereby all communication with the outside world has to be conducted via Djakarta—a legacy from the Dutch that has been monstrously perfected—is further reinforced by the disorganisation of internal communications which to all intents and purposes allows only civil and military officials to travel at will in the archipelago and intensifies the isolation of the islands *vis-à-vis* Djakarta, although it means tolerating a proliferation of small-scale smuggling to keep the regional economies alive.

And yet at the outset the chances were less unequal. The economic weight and the quality of the leaders and administrators of the "outer islands" largely counter-balanced the heterogeneous Javanese masses and their hot-headed leaders. A federal system for Indonesia seemed to be called for by the very nature of things and by the country's economic needs, since only the rapid development of the immense and largely unexploited resources and the under-populated spaces of the outer islands could redress Indonesia's fundamental imbalance. In fact, political evolution has run directly counter to the demands of geography, economics, and reason. There is no need to retrace here the chequered history of the archipelago since the Japanese occupation of 1942–45. Suffice it to remark that Dutch post-war policy, by seeking to exploit local divergencies and particularisms against the independence movement and to impose a "federal" constitution aiming at complete fragmentation, permanently discredited the idea of federalism. Even the autonomist movements of the '50s did not dare to claim it. The turbulent experiment in parliamentary democracy with a multiplicity of parties—and the first (and last) Indonesian elections in 1955 under the system of proportional representation —contributed to the same result: first of all by crushing the parties of the intellectual *élite* and the professional classes (such as Sjahrir's Socialist Party) under the weight of mass parties led by word-spinning fanatics; then by bringing into play the law of the greater number in favour of the Javanese crowd; and, finally, by revealing the strictly regional character of the parties with universal ideological pretensions. Faced with the three mass parties of Java forming a united front in spite of their apparent ideological incompatibility—Sukarno's Nationalist Party, the secessionist Muslim Party of Nahdatul Ulama, and the Communist Party (which, in spite of its name, is essentially the party of the superstitious Javanese villagers, drawing three-quarters of its votes from central and eastern Java)—only one big non-Javanese party emerged from the swarm of little local parties and groups of outer Indonesia. This was the reformist Muslim Party, *Masjumi*, centred on the strongly Islamic areas of Sumatra and Macassar, and banned in 1960 at the same time as the Socialist Party.

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY thus boiled down to regional quarrels which degenerated into local insurrections and *coups d'état* and threats of total disintegration. Sukarno, supported by the coalition of Javanese parties, was given a heaven-sent opportunity to denounce federalism, liberalism (whether political or economic), and all regional particularisms as agents of imperialism, Dutch or otherwise. Imperialism, in this internecine Indonesian struggle, was a "paper tiger," extremely effective as a bogey but largely mythical. The great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union (and, under their aegis, the United Nations), supported Sukarno to the hilt. The unity of the Indonesian Republic was to them as much an article of faith as the indivisibility of the Congo was to be at a later date. If the autonomist movements which flared up and died down in extended order from Sumatra to Amboina did in fact receive support from "mercenaries" of the Westerling type and supplies of arms and foodstuffs from Western, Chinese, or Malay freebooters operating from Singapore and Penang, they lost more than they gained from such partnerships. The rebels of Macassar, for instance, finally preferred to surrender without fight in May 1961, when they received no more than a ton of mediocre rice from their "imperialist accomplices" for every ton of rubber they exported: it was still better to be exploited by Djakarta.

Sukarno's Javanese empire finally succeeded in imposing its rule over the whole archipelago, almost without bloodshed, through the discrediting, the discouragement, or the conversion of its opponents. A striking success which few observers would have dared to predict in 1958, this complete victory was in the main unaccompanied by violent repression. The dissident troops and their officers were almost all reinstated in the inflated national army. The dissident politicians, with the exception of a few die-hards and *émigrés*, all received sinecures in embassies, in cultural and touristic organisations, and in the multiplicity of consultative councils with which the government is surrounded. With the advent of "guided democracy," the freezing of political life and the emasculation of the parties, which were either banned or reduced to shouting approval of the leader—with the exception of the Communist

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Party, on whose active support the Sukarno *régime* depends for its "popular base"—with a press tamed and restricted to official news (and with a circulation reduced by half in six years), Indonesia presents an imposing picture of surface unanimity. The discontent expressed in private has no political significance. The only thing that has counted since 1958 is palace intrigue which nearly always misfires. For, to quote Sukarno's warning to "the hypocrites and reactionaries" in his August 17th (1964) programmatic speech,

> "Don't they realise, when they whisper and murmur in their conspiratorial meetings, that among their fellow-conspirators there is always someone faithful to the Great Guide of the Revolution, someone who tells him everything?"

The Army and the Communists

THE BASIC ANTAGONISM nonetheless subsists, in a new and disconcerting form. Since 1958, as is generally known, the régime's equilibrium has rested (and still essentially rests) on two apparently antagonistic forces between which President Sukarno, like a tightrope walker, maintains a precarious balance. On the one hand, there is the Communist Party, the only organised and active mass party which has not suffered from the general torpor of political life. On the other, the many-tentacled army, which is at one and the same time a professional force equipped with modern heavy arms, an over-grown army of *guerilleros* inherited from the heroic days and newly recruited for the periodical *levées en masse* (25 million enrolled since Sukarno's appeal for the struggle against Malaysia in March 1964, according to the official figures), and in addition the sole technically efficient administrative service that covers the whole country. Relatively inconspicuous and not very popular in Java, the army controls all the outer islands which, from the insurrections of the 'fifties through the four years of permanent mobilisation against Dutch New Guinea to the "confrontation" with Malaysia, have practically never been out of a state of emergency. It controls all vital communications, key administrative posts, and runs through its delegates a multiplicity of sequestrated agricultural, industrial, and commercial enterprises. It has won over and neutralised all the regional dissident movements and incorporated the non-Javanese military and administrative *élites*. "From Sabang to Merauke" its rule is generally preferred to that of the civil administration. Finally, and above all, it has seen to it—though with decreasing efficiency—that the Communist Party has remained more or less confined to Java. The *Partai Komunis Indonesia*, for its part, having recovered from its 1948 *débâcle*, has seen the number of its adherents rise from 150,000 to nearly three million in fifteen years, and through its youth organisations and workers' and peasants' syndicates it can mobilise up to ten million and force the government's hand in its own stronghold. In a country starved of education and reading matter it distributes widely and cheaply its literature of initiation into an Indonesian-type Marxism. Profoundly Javanese in its origins and attitudes ("with friends in the palaces as well as the workers' huts," as its national-Communist leader, Dipa Nusantara—or "guardian of the Archipelago"—Aidit, has it), the party still answers pretty accurately to the description given by Sjahrir in 1949:

> "A strange sort of Communism, Hindu-Javanese, Menangkabau-Islamic or Bantam-Islamic, with strongly animistic tendencies... followed by the masses of illiterate villagers in the same way as they would follow a prince, a magician, or a mystic." (*Out of Exile.*)

Since its extraordinary congress in April 1962, inaugurated by the guest of honour, Sukarno in person, the programme of the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* includes a profession of faith in almighty God and has more and more identified itself with Sukarno. It has fallen completely into line with the obligatory national mystique of the *Pantja Sila* and the *Manipol*, which I shall attempt to explain later on.

For six years the Communist Party and the Army have been not so much rivals as complementary aspects of the Sukarno régime—popular and mystical in Java, military and authoritarian in the rest of the archipelago—and the disposition of the two machines, political and military, has permitted the central Government to dominate the whole country by relying on the fevers and the furies of Java and, at the same time, to dam them up by means of the military apparatus based in the archipelago that encircles Java. A dangerous game which, in the event of a rupture, would revive the conflict between Java and outer Indonesia in an infinitely more serious form. But the rupture has always been avoided by the association of the revolutionary party and the army in a perpetual irredentist and "anti-imperialist" crusade.

IT WAS ESSENTIALLY the Communist Party that imposed on the Government (which, admittedly, asked for nothing better) the permanent mobilisation for the "liberation of Irian Barat" and that refuses to allow any retreat in the "confrontation" with Malaysia. It is the Communist Party that keeps up the permanent xeno-

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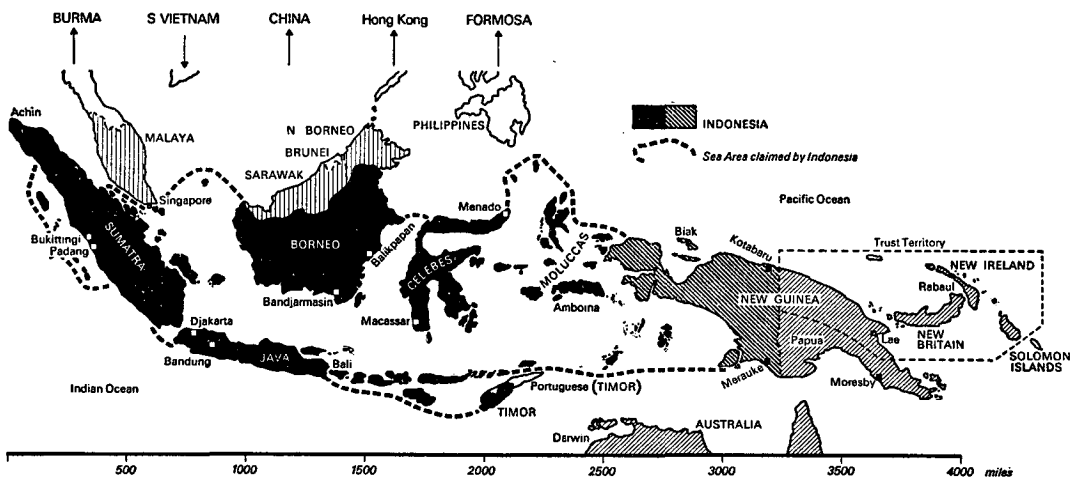
phobic ferment, that launches its trade union organisations against Dutch or Belgian or British or Malay or even Chinese enterprises, and encourages its commandos to stone European or American or Indian embassies. But it is the Army which has the weapons. It is the Army which still blocks the all-out "distribution of arms to the people" clamoured for by the PKI and dilatorily approved by Sukarno himself. It is the Army which enrols, or keeps at the ready, or sends back home the crowds of "volunteers"; it is the Army which takes over the sequestrated businesses and tries to get them going again; it is the Army which exercises authority in the strategic areas—which in practice means the whole archipelago excluding Java and Bali—and it is the Army which is the beneficiary of all the sacrifices imposed on the Indonesian people for the purchase of cruisers, bombers, and tanks in the name of "anti-imperialism."

Since the Communist Party ensures the recruitment and the strength of the Army, and the latter, by crushing the country's economy under the weight of its armaments and manpower, ensures the recruitment of the Communist Party, one might be tempted to see it as a race between two malignant growths. But Indonesia is a formidable body, and this race may go on for some time, with the country's two organised forces pulling together in the same direction, or rather in all directions, since there are no natural limits to Indonesian irredentism. After West New Guinea there is North Borneo, then Australian New Guinea, then the Portuguese half of Timor (a mere tidbit), the Malacca peninsula and the Philippines, and in the distance the vision of Greater Indonesia embracing the whole immensity of what, in the official terminology of Djakarta, is "the Indonesian Ocean," but which to the rest of the world is still known as the Indian Ocean. Above all, there will always be a neighbour who will commit the intolerable crime of which Mr. Subandrio, the Foreign Minister, speaking at Medan on October 17th, 1963, accused Malaysia: that of having "aggressed" against Indonesia by "pursuing in North Borneo a more rapid economic development than that of Indonesian Borneo, with the aim of sowing discontent in the latter territory." Not to mention—for the subject is a delicate one—the even more intolerable aggression that in the long run would be constituted by a Malayasia which enjoys what Sukarno calls "the crude and indecent prosperity of neo-colonialism," with the highest standard of living in Asia after Japan, *vis-à-vis* her neighbour and ethnic cousin, Sumatra, condemned to the stagnation of "Indonesian Socialism." Which is why Malaysia must be "crushed"—or rather "chewed up" (*ganyang*)—while in the meantime the Indonesians are invited to eat maize. This logic is inescapable.

The World of Magic

ALL THAT I HAVE SAID up to now has been an attempt to outline and explain the Indonesian *amok* in accordance with the familiar "realist" or "materialist" formulas of political science. Its only fault is precisely the fact that it is realist and materialist. The dialectic of the forces in play and the "logic of the situation" explain only what they suppose at the outset, in the exposition of the facts: the impossibility of governing the Indonesian empire "rationally." They do not explain the possibility, brilliantly demonstrated by the Sukarno experiment, of governing "irrationally" with such lasting success. The appearance of total



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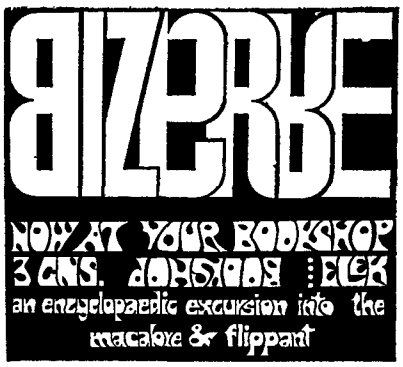
irresponsibility towards the people, and of irrationality laid down as a principle, exhibited in the behaviour and the daily language of the princes who govern this country, are something quite different from the accidental, demagogic, or opportunistic irrationality of so many States, new or old. They are the expression of a philosophy of contempt for material realities. The aristocratic indifference to everything pertaining to economics, national book-keeping, the needs and standards of living of the people; the amiable complacency with which the authorities admit their economic and financial failures as soon as one agrees to regard them as more than outweighed by their spiritual successes; their unshakeable faith in the magic of words and gestures, to which reality will eventually submit—all these are not the flowers of rhetoric, but a way of thinking that is deeply rooted in the magical universe of Java.

The first step to an understanding of Indonesian realities is to cease to attach any importance whatsoever to facts and figures. The natural wealth of the country, in spite of all that has been squandered, is still enough to ensure without too much effort the physical survival of the people by the age-old methods of a subsistence economy. For the European visitor who has seen the misery and squalor of India, "the archipelago of Gods and Demons" still seems like a peaceful paradise, smiling and rather childlike, without any really serious problems. The clamorous frenzy of official demonstrations and the follies of the country's rulers are redolent of the theatre. It is a comic opera played out in the wings of an artificial palace. It is a world apart, totally divorced from the realities of daily life, with its state apparatus imported from abroad and endowed with all the paraphernalia of a modern power thanks to the legacy of the colonial administration and the gifts and loans generously bestowed by all the countries of East and West, with its indolent and sprawling bureaucratic network whose sleepy offices come alive for no more than two or three hours of every working day, with its expensive and ramshackle technical equipment which somehow or other keeps official communications going, with its fleet and its air force and rockets and its radio network—everything, in fact, that permits the Government to manifest itself from one end of the archipelago to the other, "from Sabang to Merauke."

But all this prodigious panoply of a modern State superimposed on a country regressing towards a subsistence economy serves only to perpetuate the State itself and its hordes of retainers, to symbolise its divinely inspired greatness soaring high above ordinary mortals. This ponderous and pullulating State apparatus is there, according to the ideas of its rulers, to meet the spiritual demands of the nation, not to answer their practical needs. Only a crude materialistic Westerner (or a Soviet Russian) would dare to measure the actions of the régime against their material effects or to take the symbolic manifestations of its leaders literally, as though they applied to earthly realities. The aggressive "confrontation" with neighbouring States is a spiritual trial of strength, not a state of war. The jet fighters, heavy cruisers, and missiles supplied by Russia are there to intimidate and to demonstrate power, not to be used. The impressive industrialisation plans are there to symbolise the triumphal march of the revolution towards the Golden Age, not to produce material objects. And this revolution itself is a state of spiritual elevation, not a transformation of the material and social conditions of life.

Indonesia, as a great socialist country, has of course a planned economy based on the "*gotong-royong* eight-year-plan" elaborated by the National Planning Council under the presidency of the late Muhamad Yamin, the great poet-historiographer of the past glories of the *Madjapahit*. It is a plan more "total" than any other in the socialist world, since it embraces the whole of industrial, agricultural, and mining development and the whole of the cultural and intellectual life of the country up to 1969. Solemnly inaugurated in 1961, this total plan, now at the half-way stage, is not behind schedule or partially stalled: it is in a state of total breakdown, or rather it has never got off the ground at all. True, the Government continues to sign and launch "projects" by the hundred. But these are meaningless frivolities in a country whose existing enterprises are reduced to a standstill two days out of three, and it is futile to talk of planning when, according to



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the ministers concerned, the total collapse of the currency has made all book-keeping and all budgetary forecasting impossible. In any case, the disintegration of a plan that was never conceived as a programme of progressive achievements, but as a catalogue of ideals, does not matter very much. It was never based on any serious evaluation of available means and resources, and was worked out on the basis of statistical data that were approximate or meaningless. But it was and remains a grandiose epic poem composed with remarkable symbolic and emblematic detail, comprising 1,945 paragraphs divided into 17 chapters and 8 books to represent the historic date of *17–8–1945*, the date of the Proclamation of Independence signed by Sukarno.

THIS ECONOMIC PLAN was in fact the literary transposition of the armorial bearings of Indonesia, elaborated by Sukarno himself, with their overloaded symbolism the study of which is one of the basic subjects offered for the edification of the millions of earnest schoolchildren of this vast country: the golden *Garuda*, the vehicle of *Vishnu* symbolising creative energy, holding the escutcheon traversed by the Equator and decorated with the emblems of "the Five Principles" (Belief in God, Nationalism, Humanism, Democracy and Social Justice, represented by a Star, a Buffalo, a Chain, a Banyan Tree, a sheaf of Rice and Cotton) representing, by the number of feathers on the wings and the tail of the legendary bird, the heroic date of *17–8–1945*. The omnipotence of symbols, and the vanity of material achievements! Here is President Sukarno speaking to his people on August 17th, 1964:

> "The romance of the revolution: that is our source of invincible strength, of primordial power.... The Prime Minister of a foreign country said to me one day: 'How can your country survive if you have no heavy industry?' Forgive me for saying so, but how stupid this Prime Minister was! He thought that the life of a nation depends on the technical level of the country and its industry. No, sir! The life of a nation depends on its national consciousness, and the life of a revolution depends on its revolutionary consciousness. Not on technology! Not on industry! Not on factories or aeroplanes or asphalted roads!..."

Herbert Luethy

(A concluding article will appear next month)

Sholokhov's Prize

NO DOUBT *that in awarding the Nobel Prize to Mikhail Sholokhov the Swedish Academy have done honour to Russian literature. But is this glory necessarily, as Sholokhov assures us that it is, reflected on the Soviet Communist Party? One hopes that the jury's decision was not inspired by motives of political opportunism. Sholokhov has received the prize because he is an excellent writer, just as (it cannot be too often repeated) Pasternak was chosen in 1958 because his work was worthy of the honour.*

In December, when he attends the ceremony in Stockholm, the author of And Quiet Flows the Don *will not be thinking of the sarcastic cracks which he made in the past about ("this poet for old maids") or of the "forgotten" Ivan Bunin. His acidity may be explained by the fact that the Nobel Committee had never chosen a genuinely Soviet writer and that Sholokhov felt this "injustice" bitterly.*

Now that his merits have been recognised Sholokhov himself will no doubt recognise that the honour which has been conferred upon him carries its obligations. In allowing his name to appear on the list of Nobel Prize winners this "Cossack chauvinist" (as he has sometimes been called) has at last taken his place in the international community of great writers. One would like to believe that he might think from time to time of that other Soviet prize-winner who was obliged to forgo his reward. And, if he thinks of Pasternak, how can Sholokhov avoid some disquiet over the recent fate of Andrei Sinyavski? This critic contributed a preface—and a remarkable one—to a collection of Pasternak's poems, a collection which was, in the words of the Soviet publisher, "the first scholarly presentation" of an author "whose work constitutes an important contribution to the history of Soviet poetry."

Sinyavski was arrested only a few weeks ago. Did he, as we are told by Moscow, send mss. abroad under the pseudonym of "Abram Tertz"? Many of those who know him maintain that this accusation will not hold water. Tertz' publisher asserts that he has never had any contact, either direct or indirect, with Sinyavski (and it could be asked whether it is in any case a crime for a writer to wish for his work to be more widely known).

In any case, no-one is better placed than Sholokhov to make representations on behalf of an imprisoned writer. In doing what we must all hope that he will do, he would be in the tradition of the Nobel prize-winners, many of whom have lent the weight of their prestige to help good causes and fellow-writers in danger.

BERNARD FÉRON in LE MONDE (*Paris*)

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LETTERS

Art, Money & Taxes

I HAVE followed with great interest, and even more bewilderment, the exchange between Richard Wollheim and John Coolidge on the relation between taxation and the financing of museum collections [ENCOUNTER, October]. There is a very nice problem in social theory here that Mr. Wollheim in particular, being a professional philosopher, ought to devote more thought to.

The point at issue is the following statement by Mr. Wollheim:

> "Grants to museums and galleries... must be raised if our institutions are not to be priced out of the market and if (as I sincerely hope) we don't resort to the iniquitous American system whereby increasingly museum purchases are in the hands of rich private individuals disposing of public money which has been handed to them by the state under the euphemism 'tax concessions'."

Now, I wish to leave aside the practical question as to the best way to finance museum purchases. (Even so, I cannot help pointing out that, however things might be in the abstract, in fact American museums seem to end up with money and British museums do not. A prudent person might wish to draw some inferences from this fact.) What does concern me is Mr. Wollheim's statement—assumption, rather—that in the U.S., when a rich man gives cash or paintings to a museum, he is dispensing "public money." The implications of this statement are quite awesome.

The ground of Mr. Wollheim's proposition is that such gifts to a museum are given favourable tax treatment, and therefore money which *might* have been collected by the tax collector is allowed to remain in private ownership. True enough. But does Mr. Wollheim really wish to assert that, when the government does not take, in taxes, all the money it *might* have taken, this money is then transformed in principle from private property to public?

For instance, in both Britain and the U.S., the parents of children are explicitly given tax concessions. Will Mr. Wollheim then say that he and I are raising our children with public money? And if he will say this, how can he avoid the conclusion that he is responsible to the Exchequer for *the ways* in which he spends this money on his children?

Indeed, similar tax concessions are given to a host of people, in specific categories. Among them are the blind, the aged, the widowed, the sick, etc. Does Mr. Wollheim wish to say that these people subsist on public money? If so, then the U.S. is even more of a welfare state than anyone had imagined.

Let us push this argument to its extreme. Governments are free to raise taxes or lower them, and in both the U.K. and the U.S. there are no constitutional limits in either direction. So I would ask Mr. Wollheim: when the government cuts taxes, is it thereby *giving* public money to private citizens? And when the government refrains from raising taxes, is it thereby *allowing* public money to remain in private hands? If the answer to this last question is in the affirmative, it then follows that *all money, all of the time, is really public,* and that whatever an individual earns or possesses is only, as it were, on loan from the government.

I suppose that if one believed, with Proudhon, that private property is theft, one could adopt this position without qualms. I do not know if Mr. Wollheim follows Proudhon on this point. But I would suggest to him that it is more sensible to assume that money not paid in taxes is indeed private money, and that for the government to encourage or discourage the expenditure of private money in certain directions (through tax exemptions on gifts to museums, excise taxes on cigarettes, etc.) is not at all the same thing as expanding or restricting public expenditure.

IRVING KRISTOL

New York City

The Teach-in

MR. IRVING KRISTOL's account [ENCOUNTER, August] of the attitude of American students and intellectuals to the Viet Nam situation is rendered inaccurate by the tone of cynicism in Mr. Kristol's analysis. Those of us who have been directly involved in the university movement say flatly that the reason for the deep concern of the students and other intellectuals with Viet Nam is not because "we appear to be losing the war" or that military disaster has exposed latent dissent. The dissent has for years been dissent from a policy of American military action outside the framework of international sanction. The students have denounced with vigour the American intervention in the Dominican Republic as an even more flagrant example of unilateral action, contrary to the interests of international order. There is a very simple reason why there have been no teach-ins on the Dominican Republic, and it has nothing to do with the Marines. The issue came up too late in the academic season to produce separate new sessions; on most campuses and at the Madison Square Garden Rally, the Dominican and Viet Nam problems were bracketed.

There is also no riddle to be unravelled in the shift of student opinion to the left, nor is it necessary to raise the insolent theory that the young activists in civil rights and politics are activists because they are bored with themselves and the prospect of their future lives. The fact is that the civil rights issue furnishes a continual set of dramatic illustrations of what is wrong with American society, and a whole new area of social thought in foreign policy has opened to students whose moral sympathies were first quickened by the brutalities against the Negro.

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When Mr. Kristol describes the younger professors who "seem oblivious of the risks they are running" in acting politically on the campuses, he is out of touch with the young professors. They well understand the risks they are running, and they are quite prepared to take them. They believe that it is time a political constituency was developed through the American universities, and they are taking the leadership in developing it.

There is no doubt about the fact that a teach-in is not a debate. It is, in Anthony Hartley's words, "a political protest, whose objectivity is guaranteed by academic discussion" and, as such, is a perfectly legitimate instrument for the use of intellectuals who have found this way of re-establishing contact with the issues and the policy-makers of a government which has been less than eager to listen to those who disagree with it.

HAROLD TAYLOR

R.F.D. Ashland,
New Hampshire

Lowenthal's Errors

The Viet Nam Argument — By ARNOLD BEICHMANN

SOMEWHERE Kierkegaard says about Schopenhauer: "I am astonished to find an author who, in spite of complete disagreement, touches me at so many points." This expresses my reactions to Richard Lowenthal's essay, "America's Asian Commitment." With so many of his judgments I agree but with so many others I find myself so deeply in disagreement that I can only wonder what's happened to Lowenthal, the cool political analyst. Is it that he is a "Europe Firster" at heart, for whom only what lies between the Urals and San Francisco possesses geo-political significance?

In arguing about South-east Asia with Lowenthal I have three advantages over him, perhaps my only advantages. In the past six years I have been to South-east Asia, specifically South Viet Nam, three times as a journalist. In 1950 I met and interviewed Ngo Dinh Diem and other Vietnamese leaders, including dissidents, and travelled around the country by plane and jeep. In 1964 I travelled around the country again, particularly in villages and hamlets. I came out of Viet Nam last year doubtful of American capacity to deal successfully with a political war against the Communists *in a non-Western area.* This past summer, on my third tour, I revised my conclusions to this extent: if the U.S. can hold on in South-east Asia by conventional military tactics, in time the U.S. may learn how to combat Communist "wars of liberation." I concede that this may be optimism.

It was obvious in late Fall 1964 that America faced military defeat in Viet Nam, as it had after Diem's overthrow in November 1963. In both cases, imminent defeat was masked by official confidence, U.S. Information Agency deceptions in Saigon, and White House fog. In 1965, whatever the word "win" may mean, the U.S. is winning the war against the Communists whether south or north of the 17th Parallel. So long as China does little more than make threatening noises and the Soviet Union does little more than send food packages, is there any doubt that America can destroy the Vietcong and its North Vietnamese supply bases? That, however, is not the issue with Lowenthal. He questions whether this war is really necessary and his answer is a firm "no." Because he is an honest man, his answer is surrounded with innumerable reservations.

1. He argues that America "drifted into a full-scale war on the mainland of Asia under the pressure of events." I'm sorry to say that is true. America "drifted into" the Spanish-American War, the Mexican War, World War I, World War II, the Berlin airlift, Korea, and now Viet Nam. Like most democracies, America drifts into war or war crises because it prefers peace. Great Britain and France drifted into war in 1939. Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Tojo, did not drift into war; they planned it that way. Yet despite his accusation that America "drifted" into the war in Viet Nam, he writes that "the opening of graduated hostilities against North Viet Nam turned out to be the first act of a *fully considered* new policy of direct, large-scale intervention" [my italics].

2. America has "assumed a wider, long-term commitment to the military containment of China." This "wider, long-term commitment" has existed since the Korean war. That is why there is a Seventh Fleet. That is why there was direct U.S. military intervention during the Quemoy-Matsu bombings by China, why there was military aid to Pakistan, formation of CENTO and SEATO, arms to India after China's attack in 1962 and, I have no doubt, further aid to India if it becomes necessary. The "wider" commitment to *containment*—not "rollback"—has been and still is fact.

3. Lowenthal favours military backing to threatened governments with "a sound popular basis." And supposing there is no "sound popular basis" for a government, as in Iran, and there were another Soviet- (or this time, Peking-) inspired Azerbaijan coup, what would correspond "best to the realities of the situation"? Let Iran go down the drain because the Shah's government lacks "a sound popular basis," because the Shah refuses to reform? Few governments in the Afro-Asian world can claim a popular mandate. If we're talking about "the realities of the situation," what has a government's popularity to do with whether we ought to help its *people* resist Communist subversion or invasion?

4. President Johnson, says Lowenthal, "has opened graduated hostilities against North Viet Nam without either a previous appeal to the United Nations or a constitutional declaration of war." First—there have been two UN attempts, both with U.S. support, to settle the conflict through the

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United Nations previous to the opening of "graduated hostilities." Following the August 1964 attacks on two U.S. destroyers by Hanoi in the Gulf of Tonkin and the U.S. counter-attack, an attempt was made to bring Hanoi to the Security Council. Hanoi refused. Last April, Secretary-General U Thant who had been considering visits to Hanoi and Peking was told that neither régime would receive him and, further, that they opposed UN intervention. It should also be remembered that in August 1964, Congress passed a Joint Resolution —88-to-2 in the Senate and unanimously in the House—empowering the President "to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attacks against the forces of the United States (and) all necessary steps, including the use of armed force" on behalf of Viet Nam and SEATO members who ask for that aid.

5. Lowenthal says that the commitment to military containment of China "is based on a false analysis of the conditions for successful guerrilla warfare. . . ." I agree with Lowenthal, but even if there were a "correct" analysis I doubt that America or any other democracy could do much about it. The "war of liberation" strategy is specifically designed to outflank the militarily powerful democracies so that they cannot mass their powers effectively nor mount successful counter-insurgency tactics. The "guerrilla war" tactics depend upon the use of organised terror, so that trying to work with "the people" imperils the people. In the last five years, the Vietcong murdered some 25,000 village officials and civilians—this does not include military losses—in South Viet Nam. From January 1964 to June 1965 alone, the Vietcong assassinated an average of *four* village officials *a day*. That's a lot of bodies and, of course, such terror has a deterrent effect upon potential volunteers in villages and hamlets. I do not suggest that terror alone accounts for the Vietcong's great victories. Genuine grievances exist which have been exacerbated by successive Vietnamese governments and have been brilliantly exploited by the Vietcong. The Communist movements in Asia are far better organised to conduct political warfare because they have a long-term commitment to "rollback" not *containment* of democratic or non-Communist régimes. Until the U.S. and the U.K. learn the "correct" analysis of guerrilla warfare, half a world may slide behind an Asian Iron Curtain, as indeed Eastern Europe fell before Stalin's political warfare until the West learned.

6. Lowenthal believes that "the decisive cause" of Vietcong success has not been aid from the North (by and large, I agree) "but the absence of an alternative, or any other cohesively organised and popularly based political force: in guerrilla warfare, you cannot beat something with nothing" (and I agree with that, too). Yet even if there were an alternative, even if there were a better-organised popularly-based political force in Viet Nam, it would still be a serious problem for the Vietnamese people *alone* to beat back the Communists. Saigon could redistribute the land down to the very last landlord-owned hectare, and the U.S. could distribute a ton of chemical fertiliser to every peasant and install diesel pumps to irrigate the rice-fields—and somebody would *still* have to protect the peasant and his village. Let us speak frankly. It will be a long time before Americans will be able to match the Communists when it comes to political warfare, just as it will be a long time before the Communists can match American industrial production. When the U.S. found itself threatened by Khrushchev's missile sites, President Kennedy did what comes naturally to an industrial-military power. He threatened to use that power and didn't bother to set up a "cohesively organised and popularly based political force" in Cuba. That had been tried before the Bay of Pigs invasion and had failed miserably. Lowenthal argues that in no other South-east Asian country is there as popular an anti-colonial force to-day as there was in Viet Nam under Ho Chi Minh and since no such popular movement to-day exists in neighbouring countries, China will be unable to "start" wars of liberation by pressing a button. In 1948–50, as Lowenthal points out, China tried this strategy in South India, Burma, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines—and it failed. But this is now 1965: and look at Indonesia, Burma, India, and Pakistan, look at the divided Malayasia, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. Is the China of 1965 no stronger than it was fifteen years ago? And can anyone really maintain that the rest of South-east Asia (or all of South Asia) has grown stronger and is more viable to-day than in 1950?

7. Very well, says Lowenthal, even though the domino theory is "an artificial nightmare," this artificial nightmare contains "one important element of truth"—that "a negotiated withdrawal from Viet Nam might be the beginning of the end of the American military presence on the mainland of Asia." And without this military presence, what would stop a Peking take-over? Even if there is no American military presence, China will not take over because, unless neighbouring countries "show a degree of instability that invites a bid for Communist revolution, Peking seems likely to respect their neutrality for the next period." Not because China loves peace but because Chinese "actions will be based on a more realistic estimate of their strength than their talk." How can Lowenthal know this or predict this? How much time is encompassed by the phrase, "the next period"? And what comes after "the next period" when China has industrialised, perfected its bomb, even perhaps built a missile delivery system?

8. Lowenthal argues that "even the greatest military power must in certain conditions accept political defeats," something President Johnson has thus far refused to do. But why must a political defeat "under certain conditions" be necessarily accepted and thus ensure the irrevocability of a Communist dictatorship? The Communists "lost" in Malaya but haven't accepted defeat; for them it is *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Is a political defeat at the hands of Communists forever? Is there no reason to avert such defeats even if they threaten areas which are not "of vital importance to American security, nor of crucial weight in the world balance of power"? May it not, indeed, be much

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London

How *did it happen? The 15 words of Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach" ("For the world which seems to lie out before us like a land of dreams") which President Johnson attributed by mistake to Robert Lowell are, however, words which are very dear to the poet Lowell. In his famous long poem "The Mills of the Kavanaughs," Lowell has used two epigraphs. And of these two, the first is three lines from Arnold's "Dover Beach":*

"Ah, love let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams...."

It seems that the unidentified member of the White House staff who "came up with what was thought to be" (but unfortunately it was not) "an appropriate Lowell line" had hurriedly looked at Lowell's "Mills of the Kavanaughs" and without giving any further thought picked out the last 15 words from its first epigraph which he (or she) found at the top of the poem.

N.Y. HERALD-TRIBUNE

Frankfurt

THE NEW *German production here of Brecht's* Three-penny Opera *has an unusual feature that must not go unmentioned. It is the inclusion of a hitherto unperformed scene, written in 1928 and rejected by Brecht, which was discovered among his papers recently. It depicts the unsuccessful candidature for a job in Peachum's emporium of a Belgian newspaperman who has been sacked and black-balled by Fleet Street, for disclosing the ruthless massacre of Congolese natives by the occupying troops.* THE TIMES

London

FROM THE *Brecht play* Days of the Commune, *to be presented in German by the Berliner Ensemble at the National Theatre to-night, the Lord Chamberlain has ordered one sentence to be deleted. It runs,* "Zeigt uns die Kolben... die Löcher haben wir," *is spoken by a woman of the mob to her companions at Montmartre, and is, says Lord Cobbold, obscene. They were saying at the National Theatre, yesterday, that his lordship had really gone to town this time, and must be a master of colloquial German. Translated literally, into engineering terms, it means, "Show us the piston . . . we have the cylinders."* THE GUARDIAN

Tel Aviv

WHEN *architects, doctors, or nuclear scientists get together internationally, the debates that ensue usually make the world headlines. Not only that: governments and industry are solidly behind them. Film makers and even musicians attract the attentions both of the press and of the producing organisations and cultural institutions that exist to further their interests. Why is it, one may well ask, that the theatre in these matters is still so much of a Cinderella of the arts?*

This year's congress of the International Theatre Institute went by almost unnoticed.... An American critic, Richard Schechner, editor of the Tulane Drama Review, *put the extreme case, and truly set the cat among the pigeons by advocating the anarchistic technique of the "Happening" even for the classics. Since we were going to get museum-like reproductions whether we liked it or not, he pleaded, what was wanted was the bold treatment for which his chosen slogan was "Rape the classics!" Mr. Schechner was all for simultaneous productions of, say,* Othello *and* The Cherry Orchard, *on adjoining stages or even on the same platform played before one and the same audience.*

THE TIMES

Ascot

WHEN *the dustman asked the stockbroker to help him carry away a 5 ft. bath full of rubbish it started a row which the dustman ended with four words. The dustman said outside Ascot magistrates' court yesterday: "I am sorry I used the words. But they are in* Lady Chatterley's Lover *and that has been passed by a judge."*

The words were written on a piece of paper and handed to the magistrate.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

AMERICAN *author James Baldwin will go to the Lord Chamberlain's office this morning and try to argue two censored speeches back into his play* Blues for Mr. Charlie. *The play is being played at the Aldwych Theatre in London. It has already appeared on Broadway—uncut. It should prove an interesting meeting as Britain's theatre censors try to justify why the version of a play already seen by thousands of Americans is not suitable for Britain. Among the Chamberlain's queries was one referring to God.* THE SUN

Peredelkino

FIFTEEN *miles from Moscow, Peredelkino is a stretch of silver birches, limes and lilacs, a writers' Walden. Pasternak spent his last years here; he was buried in one of the cot-like tombs of the sloping graveyard. Here in the summer Moscow writers come to breathe country air and rest from their urban engagements. We pass the gates of Kornei Chukovsky. I go in to have a pre-lunch brandy with him. His dacha has more the appearance of a New England farmhouse. On his study table:* ENCOUNTER, *Wilde's* Letters, *a book about "Max," another on Edwardian England....* THE SPECTATOR

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easier and less costly in "blood and treasure" to fight on a secondary battlefield than in "the powerhouse called Europe"?

9. Lowenthal says that "the number of West Europeans who echo General de Gaulle's doubts about America's reliability has greatly increased" because of the Asian commitment which is bound to reduce "their [United States] concern for Europe and may lead to reduction of their forces there...." We know from high-placed West Europeans (NATO's Manlio Brosio, U.K.'s Michael Stewart) what would be thought about American reliability if the U.S. withdrew from South-east Asia. After all, Lowenthal does say that "American withdrawal from Viet Nam, in whatever face-saving conditions might be negotiated, would certainly lead some of the Asian members of SEATO to reconsider the usefulness of the American alliance." He says, further, that "the U.S. cannot simply withdraw and abandon the South Vietnamese leaders and forces allied to them *without catastrophic international effect*" [my italics]. Would not such a withdrawal also act as a testimonial to the validity of the Chinese Communist ideological battle against the U.S.S.R., namely, that Chinese intransigence pay off?

10. Lowenthal writes that the U.S. has "bombed the territory of a foreign state, not indeed without provocation... in open disregard of 'world opinion.'" Lowenthal put quotes around the phrase, "world opinion," so I take it he has reservations about this elusive concept. He should. It seems quite clear that few Asian statesmen are upset that the U.S. is bombing North Viet Nam. Most Asians regard the attack on the Hanoi régime as a way of holding Peking at bay. I have not heard that India is complaining, nor is the majority of the British Labour Party, the Conservative Party, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Lee Kuan Yew. No matter what "world opinion" in Asia—from Japan to Turkey—is saying publicly, Professor Lowenthal can be assured that, privately, no one is complaining because in Asia, the ancient enemy is Chinese imperialism. Have the bombings "alienated many neutrals"? What neutrals, not previously alienated, are now alienated and are acting upon their alienation? And how has the UN been "further weakened"? If anything, the 20th General Assembly is witnessing a general strengthening of the U.N.

11. "Last not least," writes Lowenthal, "they [U.S.A.] have created a crisis of conscience for many loyal American citizens." Now there is nothing new about a "crisis of conscience" for Americans. I recall that a most distinguished American, Norman Thomas, was so afflicted by conscience at the outset of World War II that he lent his good name to the "America First Committee," while other equally loyal Americans were pressing for U.S. intervention in the war against Hitler. Some of the finest American liberals were in the vanguard of opposition to the Truman Doctrine to save Greece and Turkey because of their "crisis of conscience." In England Bertrand Russell was so afflicted by conscience during the Cuba crisis in October 1962 that he cabled President Kennedy "YOUR ACTIONS DESPERATE ... NO CONCEIVABLE JUSTIFICATION" and to Khrushchev, "YOUR CONTINUED FORBEARANCE IS OUR GREAT HOPE." Lowenthal believes that "the protesters seem to embody the American democratic tradition," but is he unaware that among the staunchest supporters of Administration policy in South-east Asia have been the American trade union leaders and their memberships? Are they not part of the American democratic tradition? And most recently, the editors of the *Partisan Review*, while voicing a "lament [about] the present or past policies of the United States in Viet Nam," confessed that "we have not heard of any alternative policy, however, which would actually lead to a negotiated peace in Viet Nam or promote the interests of the people of South-east Asia...."

12. "The airy contempt with which many of the unofficial defenders of official policy nowadays treat such 'sentimental' considerations... [as] the wishes of the unfortunate people of Viet Nam." I assume Lowenthal is talking about the people of *South* Viet Nam because nobody could possibly consult the wishes of the people of *North* Viet Nam. I have tried in recent months to enquire into some of the "wishes" of the Vietnamese people. I have talked with some of the leaders of the Vietnamese Confederation of Labour (*e.g.*, Tran Quoc Buu, who fought with the Viet Minh, was imprisoned by the French and left Ho when he saw what a Communist victory would mean). They are not against the war, although they are horrified (as I am and as anybody else is who has seen this war first-hand) at the damage and the toll of human life. The peasants I met in South Viet Nam—some of them from villages north of Danang in Vietcong territory—wished strongly that the Vietcong could be defeated, although once they welcomed the invaders. The one-time Vietcong soldiers I met last summer in a defectors' camp (they were not prisoners-of-war; they could come and go) in My Tho, thirty miles south of Saigon, told me (yes, through an interpreter) of the horrors of living with the Vietcong and their unwillingness to inflict further terror on their own people. I know of the high Vietnamese Army desertion rate but a high Vietcong desertion rate became manifest with large-scale U.S. intervention. Nor are the Vietnamese Catholics against the war, and there has even been a resurgence of anti-Vietcong sentiment among the Buddhist clergy.

13. Among the few steps which might facilitate negotiations would be to "stop bombing the North." There was a bombing pause late last Spring but there was no response from Hanoi. I oppose the bombings north of the 17th Parallel simply because they are costly in planes and pilots in return for the damage inflicted on minor logistical targets, including, no doubt, *papier-mâché* bridges and fake surface-to-air missile sites. My own impression remains that the bombings have been most effective in the South against Vietcong concentrations. America, he says, "could make it clear that it is prepared to accept the Vietcong as a negotiating partner in its own right." Lowenthal should know that accepting the Vietcong or its National Liberation Front at the conference table is not the problem: Lyndon John-

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son, Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy and, most recently, Arthur Goldberg, have made it clear that the Front is welcome at the table. But Peking and Hanoi have ruled out the South Vietnamese government as a participant in negotiations. Prime Minister Pham Van Dong told the North Vietnamese National Assembly on April 8th that any settlement must be based "on the decisive voice of the National Front for the Liberation of South Viet Nam." China, alas, has made similar statements.

The essential implication of Richard Lowenthal's article is that Asia and Africa matter little; only Europe matters. Don Quixote insisted that the barber's basin was the helmet of Mambrino, despite all evidence to the contrary. I hope Lowenthal can be more easily persuaded about Asian realities.

Vain Counsel

As a long-time admirer of my friend Richard Lowenthal's analyses of international politics, I write to express my dismay at his relapse—temporary, one hopes—into Far Eastern Chamberlainism, and to set forth what seem to me his most serious errors ["America's Asian Commitment," Encounter, October].

With Professor Lowenthal's objectives (checking Russian and Chinese expansionism) and his strategy (containment) I could not agree more. But I find his estimate of China's threat—written, it is fair to note, before Peking's involvement in the Indo-Pakistani war—too low, his estimate of Indian potential for containing China too high, and his comments on Washington's policies and their results out-of-date and mistaken.

His errors arise largely from his underestimation of the military factor in world politics and history. Military operations alone cannot produce political stability; but without military superiority, and the credible will to employ it, we shall be lost now as surely as Czechoslovakia was lost in 1938 and France in 1940.

Some specific points: (*1*) President Johnson has not, *pace* Professor Lowenthal, begun a "new" policy in Viet Nam; he has only, as President Kennedy did in 1961 in Berlin, increased the American commitment to meet increased hostile force. The American people have consciously supported our containment of China, in addition to Russia, since 1949; they should, and will, continue to do so.

(*2*) Neither Moscow, as Professor Lowenthal seems to think, nor Peking, has profited from American escalation in Viet Nam. On the contrary, Russia, and—for the first time—China are *both* losing influence because of it: Russia in Eastern Europe (where its professions of support for Hanoi now rightly sound increasingly hollow) and China in Pyongyang and Hanoi (for the same reason).

(*3*) Professor Lowenthal thinks we have lost the Vietnamese war, or at least that we cannot win it. So thought the *New Statesman* and the *New Republic* in 1944–1945 about the Greek Civil War; looking back, does he think they were right, and Churchill wrong? Should we, because the French lacked popular support in Indo-China in 1941, have allowed Japan to conquer it and all of South-East Asia? The American bombing and ground-troop commitment to Viet Nam have (as the *Economist's* Saigon correspondent wrote on September 18th) "stabilised" the military situation; South Vietnamese army morale has "risen sharply"; and the United States is "there to stay"—at least until the Vietcong has been defeated.

(*4*) Why is Professor Lowenthal so sure that the United States, because of Viet Nam and its insufficient "psychological and moral resources," will cut down its commitments in Europe and neglect the Soviet threat there? We did not in the Korean War; why should we now, particularly with the memory of the 1962 Soviet missile threat in Cuba? The threat to our European commitments, insofar as it exists, is from General de Gaulle who proposes to throw us out of France; but this will not cause our departure from Europe. Professor Lowenthal's year at Columbia and Berkeley may perhaps not have given him a representative view of America's "psychological and moral resources"; but he might remember what they were in 1944 in France, in 1948 in Berlin, in 1950 in Korea, in 1958–1962 in Berlin again, and in 1962 in Cuba. True, we make mistakes (*e.g.*, the 1965 Dominican blunder, for which the best we can say is Fiorello La Guardia's wry admission, "When I make a mistake, it's a beaut!"); but even so it hardly seems likely that we will leave Europe now. Our bombing in North Viet Nam was and is justified retaliation for the Hanoi-directed war in the South. Why does Professor Lowenthal, like the British and French in the Spanish Civil War, prefer non-intervention? As for the American leadership "undermining the faith of their young generation in the righteousness of its cause," the great majority of Americans, young and old, believe (as all public opinion polls testify) that our cause—the containment of China and the preventing of political change by force and violence—is both just and in our vital national interest. As for the minority who feel otherwise, out of idealistic motives—well, the Oxford undergraduates who in 1935 vowed not to fight for King and Country did so out of idealism, but they hardly contributed to peace and stability thereby.

(*5*) Finally, as to Professor Lowenthal's allegation that the views of those who support American policy in Viet Nam are "ominously similar" to Imperial German *Realpolitik*, and that President Johnson is "undermining the faith of their young generation in the righteousness of its cause." In an increasingly unstable world, America must, as only it decisively can, further peaceful, and prevent violent, change. For Professor Lowenthal, terrorism in Saigon is evidently less important than in West Berlin or in Selma, Alabama. It is easy (although perhaps not entirely helpful) to tell the fire brigade it cannot hope to put out the fire, and therefore should retreat to wait for a better opportunity. Professor Lowenthal might wish to recall—as Neville Chamberlain did not—Demosthenes' vain

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counsel to the Athenians: "if any man supposes this to be peace, which will enable Philip to master all else and attack you last, he is mad. . . ."

WILLIAM E. GRIFFITH

Center for International Studies,
M.I.T., Cambridge, Mass.

Brevity

THE Viet Nam argument rages, but even after your own many-sided contributions—Kristol, Lowenthal, Honey—much can still be said, but the briefer the better. The most concise formulation I know was the one which Lord Thomson of Fleet failed to make to Prime Minister Kosygin when, as *The Economist* reported (18th September), "it was Mr. Kosygin who did the interviewing and Lord Thomson the floundering. . . ." As the *Economist* went on:

> " 'This is a complicated matter' is just not good enough as a reply to the familiar questions that Mr. Kosygin, doing his duty by the Chinese, prodded Lord Thomson with. Lord Thomson should have drawn a deep breath and said three things. *First*, that the weary South Vietnamese would now be living in peace, with a steadily rising standard of life, except for the Communists' decision at the end of the 1950s to resort to violence to achieve the political aims they may believe in but others do not. *Second*, that the Communists' readiness to use force to change the frontier between their world and ours is incompatible with the coexistence Mr. Kosygin still says he believes in. *Third*, that if the rules are to be changed—if coexistence is to be dropped—there are plenty of places where the West can use the tactics the Communists have used in Viet Nam. Three sentences would have done it. It would have been fascinating to read Mr. Kosygin's reply. . . ."

It would be fascinating to read anybody's reply, but, please, with that same three-sentence brevity.

DONALD THOMPSON

London

Free Verse

THE current issue of ENCOUNTER reprints on page 61 twelve lines of verse from "Cancer's a Funny Thing" by J. B. S. Haldane, which was published in the *New Statesman* of February 21st, 1964. This material, which is copyright, was published without our permission, and I can find no acknowledgment to the *New Statesman*.

Leaving aside the legalities of the matter, I think that the usual courtesies should be observed, and I would appreciate your arranging for an acknowledgment in your next issue.

PAUL JOHNSON

New Statesman,
London

AUTHORS

THE essay by **Peter Weiss** in this number is a by-product of the writing of his new play, *Die Ermittlung*, which is described as an "Oratorium in 11 Cantos" about the Auschwitz concentration camp and the recent Frankfurt trial. There have just been simultaneous performances of the world première in nineteen theatres, mostly in West Germany and an unusual midnight reading in London by the Royal Shakespeare Company (directed by Peter Brook). There was also, curiously enough, a special reading of the play in the East German Parliament, with Cabinet Ministers (including Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Abusch) and leading members of the Brechtian *Berliner Ensemble* (Helene Weigel, Ekkehard Schall) participating. This, in turn, is presumably a by-product of the special Communist production of Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade* play in Rostock which he found to be "the best of them all." Apparently this was the only interpretation which, for Weiss, grasped Marat's true heroic revolutionary mould; at any rate his gratitude for the lesson in dialectics was swift and comprehensive. In subsequent interviews in the press he has announced, to the dismay of the Berlin *avant-garde* intelligentsia, his solidarity with the "socialist countries" against "capitalism," and his conversion to Marxism-Leninism; this made him the first German writer to have "gone East" since Brecht returned from Hollywood to Ulbricht's sector of Berlin fifteen years ago. Weiss now argues that in the West (where up till now all of his novels and plays have been published, translated, and produced), there are "great difficulties in disseminating the truth . . . one has to work like a Partisan fighter. . . ." We will, of course, be continuing to publish new work by Peter Weiss, even if we have to give the slip to police spies and capitalist censors and make midnight contact with him secretly in the London Underground. . . .

John Bayley is a Fellow of New College, Oxford, and Tutor in English Literature. His latest book, *The Characters of Love*, was published by Constable. This year is, of course, the 100th anniversary of Rudyard Kipling's birth. . . .

Mrozek's Family, by **Jan Kott**, was translated by Boleslaw Taborski. . . .

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NO WHERE TO GO?

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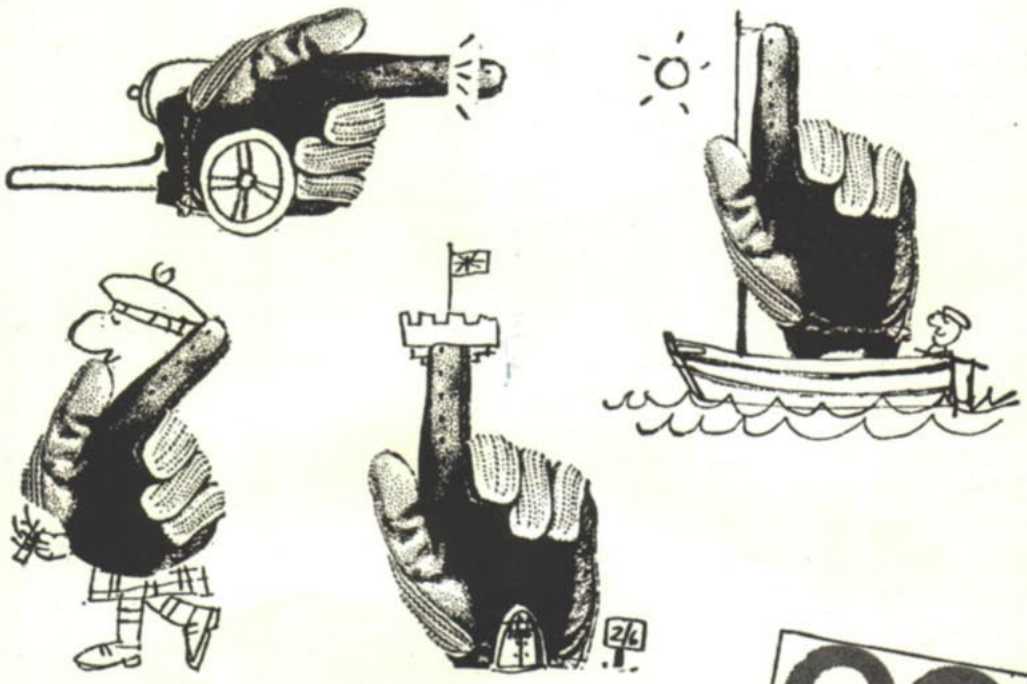

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JONATHAN SWIFT

Nigel Dennis

"This is a very attractive book. It is short, concise, written with keen and lively feeling and does credit to Mr Dennis's talents as much as to his great subject. He has taken a walk round his own mind and settled for objective lucidity, he has circumnavigated Freud and decided to ignore him, he dismisses elaborate theories about Swift's parentage as unimportant—it is Swift's ideas that interest him. Where I am indebted to Mr Dennis is for his interpretation of Swift's mind and principles, all that lay behind his belief in religion and authority, his royalism, his contempt and pity for his fellow-men, his hatred of dissenters and unyielding orthodoxy. He draws a brilliant comparison between him and Defoe, between "Gulliver's Travels" and "Robinson Crusoe"—"the primary text book of Capitalism" *Cyril Connolly, The Sunday Times* 21s

GEORGE ELIOT

Walter Allen

Walter Allen, novelist and authority on the English novel, has written a sensitive and intelligently executed portrait of George Eliot: woman, writer, free spirit. This imaginative study has the flow and spark of fiction and the sagacity of scholarship, revealing the life and growth of a very great novelist 21s

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